



# **Palestinian Public Diplomacy: from Camp David II to the ICJ Ruling on the Israeli Wall**

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**May 2006**

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الدبلوماسية الفلسطينية العامة: من كامب ديفيد 2 إلى  
إجراءات إفتاء محكمة العدل الدولية بشأن بناء الجدار  
الإسرائيلي

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This thesis was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the  
Masters Degree in International Studies from the Faculty of Graduate Studies at  
Birzeit University – Palestine

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To my **father**, for raising me a proud Palestinian;

To my **mother**, for her deep love and unconditional devotion;

To my brother **Tarek**, for his constant care and support;

To my brother **Samer**, for inspiring and encouraging me;

To **Dr. Samir**, for being a patient, insightful and excellent mentor throughout my graduate studies;

To **Palestine**, my homeland, for allowing me to revive my identity.

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## **Abstract**

This thesis sheds light on the meaning and usefulness of the concept of "Public Diplomacy". Although some would question its utility as a concept, Public Diplomacy has entered the lexicon of the American and British Foreign Policy in the post 9-11 terrorist events. Public Diplomacy, incorporated into Foreign Policy, revolves around methods for State and non-State representatives to qualify as a voice for their country to the outside world. The thesis also traces the Public Diplomacy failures of the Palestinian leadership during and after the negotiations at Camp David II and it highlights the successes achieved at The Hague, when the International Court of Justice made it clear that the Israeli Wall and settlements were illegal.

While Neo-Realism is essential in understanding a State's policy to adopt a strong Public Diplomacy as a national objective and interest, it is not sufficient to explain the mechanisms and actors involved in this newly introduced concept. With its emphasis on institutions and non-state actors, Institutionalism provides a better understanding and a comprehensive picture of the functioning of Public Diplomacy.

The thesis concludes with recommendations for implementation of an effective and sustainable Palestinian Public Diplomacy, paving the way for a potent, yet, peaceful and practical means to discredit the Israeli propaganda.

## الملخص

هذه الدراسة تلقي الضوء على معنى وأهمية مبدأ الـ "الدبلوماسية العامة". رغم أن البعض قد يشكك في أهمية هذا المبدأ، إلا أنه دخل لغة السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة الأمريكية ولبريطانيا خلال المرحلة ما بعد العمليات الإرهابية التي وقعت في 9 أيلول 2001. إن الدبلوماسية العامة، المندمجة في السياسة الخارجية، تتمحور حول الأساليب المستعملة لكل من ممثلي الدولة وممثلي المنظمات غير الحكومية للتأهيل ليصبحوا صوتاً لدولهم عند العالم الخارجي. وتتناول الدراسة أيضاً فشل القيادة الفلسطينية في الدبلوماسية العامة خلال وبعد مفاوضات كامب ديفيد 2، كما ستدخل الدراسة في الانتصار الذي تم تحقيقه في محكمة العدل الدولية والتي أكدت بوضوح على عدم شرعية الجدار والمستوطنات التي تبنيها إسرائيل. بينما تعتبر المدرسة الواقعية أساساً لفهم سياسة الدولة لتطبيق الدبلوماسية العامة كهدف ومصلحة وطنية، إلا أنها ليست كافية لشرح الأساليب و



## Introduction

### Focus of Study

Many scholars are focusing on the importance of American and British Public Diplomacy (PD) in the Arab World in order to improve their stand with the current "War on Terrorism."<sup>1</sup> However, Arabs in general, and Palestinians in particular have not given importance to such an important field in order to improve their image in the West and to harness the power of their people to project a modern image:

*"Any people should seek to be a subject of history and not only an object of history. Making history is extremely important... explaining history and disseminating one's version of history is of equal importance. We have not given this dimension sufficient attention- irrigating our narrative, our version, our interpretation of history."*<sup>2</sup>

Stemming from this reality of Palestinian diplomatic inactivity, accurately advanced by Palestinian PLO Representative in Washington Afif Safieh, Palestinians have not been able to articulate a positive image of their case that enhances their legitimate rights in self determination.

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<sup>1</sup> see for example William A. Rugh's "Engaging the Arab & Islamic Worlds through Public Diplomacy", Public Diplomacy Council , 2004; Mark Leonard's "Public Diplomacy", Foreign Policy Center, 2002; Tuch's "Communicating with the world", St. Martin's Press, NY , 1990

<sup>2</sup> "The Anatomy of the PLO Mission: Recapturing the Historical Initiative", transcripts of remarks by Amb Afif Safieh, The Palestine Center, Washington, D.C. for the record no. 240 (2 December 2005)

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 in the US underscore an urgent need for more effective and institutional Palestinian PD. As Safieh puts it when referring to the Palestine Liberation Organization: "only a few thousands may work in the institution, but the nine million Palestinians are the powerful vehicles of the idea."<sup>3</sup> Governmental agencies should reach out to the societal actors because PD is a multi-dimensional and inclusive process.

Given the escalating negative attitudes towards the Palestinians, the effects of PD decisions and implementations should be of primary considerations in the Palestinian foreign policy. In fact, a Herculean effort is needed to challenge Israel diplomatically and confront their territorial appetite and enterprise based on demographic pretexts. This effort should be a collective one, involving actors/credible messengers from diverse sectors of the Palestinian scene.

Taking Sharon's disengagement, the Palestinians lost another historical narrative, since the world believed Sharon's disengagement from the Gaza Strip is a first move in implementing peace. There is no spokesperson to articulate the Palestinian history of dispossession and to propagate their narrative.

## **Aspects of Research**

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<sup>3</sup> "The Anatomy of the PLO Mission: Recapturing the Historical Initiative", transcripts of remarks by Amb Afif Safieh, The Palestine Center, Washington, D.C. for the record no. 240 (2 December 2005)

This thesis will start with a definitional debate on PD. Why is it important to rectify the image of Palestinians in the West in the post 9/11 and how can a professional and most of all sustainable PD serve such an objective will be covered in Chapter one. This first chapter will provide a working definition for PD that would serve as a framework to the rest of the thesis. Two schools of thought will be used to help us understand the functioning of PD. The two theories will be engaged to better grasp the concept in International Relations: Neo-Realism and Institutionalism. Of particular interest is the finding that both schools are associated and complementary in the understanding of PD. The latter is conducted by the government for its national interests (a pillar of Neo-Realism) while simultaneously focusing on international institutions (argument of Institutionalists). The two schools will therefore offer an explanation and an operational meaning and significance of PD. Because the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian land continues unabated with all its racist forms, it is overwhelmingly in the national interest that Palestine formulates and manages its foreign policies in a manner that it receives the required world cooperation/support. On the same note, Palestine needs to conduct its PD through a strong coordination with the various local and international institutions. In a nutshell, the purpose of PD is to influence opinion in target countries to make it easier for a government to achieve their aims.

Chapter two explores how the Palestinian Authority failed in PD during the period starting from Camp David II until the eruption of Al Aqsa Intifada. The "generous offer" of Barak is a term widely used internationally; it exemplifies the dismal state

of Palestinian PD. After the trilateral negotiations of Camp David, Palestinians, unlike Israelis, failed to work on a coherent strategy and expose their case through repetitive projects, tours and conferences and regular contacts with world decision makers (both official and non official). A number of recommendations will be drawn from past mistakes, among which are that there need to be a consistent Palestinian message on major issues in order to project the Palestinian case, a clear official line on major issues, and policy making think tanks to research and produce essential policy papers on issues and events as they arise.

In the chapter that follows, Chapter three, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling against the construction of Israel's wall, will be raised. The unequivocal ICJ ruling considering the wall being built by Israel as "contrary to international law" lends strong legal and moral support to international efforts to end the Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Again, despite the Palestinian PD victory at the ICJ, there is an urgent need to rely on the ruling for a successful and efficient Palestinian PD. This will be tackled in detail at the end of the last chapter.

The final recommendations to the Palestinian leadership (Palestinian Authority (PA) /Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)) revolve around two main elements of PD: to work on a vision and to ponder an effective strategy accompanied by an effectual structure based on proactive and even aggressive advocacy campaigns to rival Israel's sophisticated Public Relations efforts. Israel has succeeded in reframing the conflict based on "security" and the need for "self defense", while portraying the Palestinians as being "terrorists". Palestinians should reverse the table and work on

instruments to control the parameters of the game. Unfortunately, Palestinians have only been answering Israel's reframing, sometimes even late (Camp David failure, disengagement, etc...). In fact, Palestinian PD is retroactive. The Palestinian leadership waits for a crisis to come up to start working on its position. It is essential to explain the Palestinian position during the non-crisis moments, rare as they are, in order to capture the world attention. Other key recommendations to the Palestinian leadership is the issuance of a presidential directive establishing a priority commitment to PD, the creation of a coordinating structure, aimed at harmonizing PD efforts of all Palestinian actors (governmental agencies, private sector, civil society organizations and Palestinian expatriates), and increased training, resources, as well as up-to-date technology to all governmental and non governmental officials.

### **Significance of Research**

Many scholars sought to tackle the Palestinians' dilemma and the lack of bargaining power when faced to Israel's art in political propaganda. Many have also agreed that there is a privileged Western Israeli relationship.<sup>4</sup> The major conclusions reached were that Palestinians need to work on a unified message that could lend them world support<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Camille Mansour, "Beyond Alliance, Israel in U.S. Foreign Policy", Institute for Palestine Studies, Columbia University Press, NY, 1994

<sup>5</sup> see for example Michael Adams "What Went Wrong in Palestine?", Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 18, No.1, Special Issue Palestine 1948, Autumn 1988; or Kathleen Christison, "Perceptions of Palestine", University of California Press, 1999

But this is not enough. In order to reach out to the international community, a concerted strategy for a sustainable Palestinian Public Diplomacy to forge an effective international lobbying force is needed. As a new concept, Palestinian Public Diplomacy needs to be applied and to adapt to the XXI Century demands in terms of information technology. Accordingly, this thesis seeks to present recommendations with new structures for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Palestinian leadership.

The second aspect of novelty in this research is that it goes beyond having a unified message; i.e. it heralds the importance of a long-term and sustained Palestinian Public Diplomacy as a national strategy, not only to win the current information battle with Israel, but to constantly reach mass audiences and respond to the rapidly changing international landscape.

Furthermore, as the ICJ ruling on the Wall is a relatively new event, few researchers have discussed in details the importance of diplomatically utilizing such a success in order to foster favorable attitudes toward the Palestinian cause.

### **Main Research Questions**

This thesis seeks to address the following questions:

- What is "Public Diplomacy"?
- How does Public Diplomacy operate?
- What are the reasons behind the Palestinian diplomatic inactivity?
- Why is a Palestinian Public Diplomacy needed along with the traditional diplomatic approach?
- How and where to start from to embark on an efficient Palestinian Public Diplomacy?

### **Methodology and Work Plan**

The thesis will be outlined in three main sections:

- 1) a theoretical section that outlines two different theories that could address the subject;
- 2) a historical section that relates to the failed Camp David negotiations, highlighting the Palestinian misuse of the media which reported the Israeli narrative;
- 3) a section on the post-International Court of Justice Ruling on the Wall being built by Israel, as a case study on how to utilize the ruling by using an effective Public Diplomacy approach.

### **Resources**

In this research, two categories of resources will be used: primary and secondary ones.

Primary resources in the form of diaries by Public Diplomacy practitioners will be used to understand the meaning of this new concept. Official statistics, UN resolutions, International Court of Justice documents, and speeches of some leaders will also be employed as primary sources to tackle the usefulness and functioning of Public Diplomacy in addressing its various facets.

Secondary sources will include academic and/or analytical researches to understand different accounts on the Palestinian case.

## **Chapter one: Public Diplomacy (PD), a definitional debate**



## 1.1. Introduction

Although the term "Public Diplomacy" was first used in 1965 by Dean Edmund Gullion of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University<sup>6</sup>, it has become at the forefront of an important transition in International Relations, the rise of "soft power"<sup>7</sup> in a field long dominated by "realpolitik". The main outcomes of today's new world order reside in the information and technological revolution, as well as new calls for democratization.<sup>8</sup> In fact, scholars who have previously focused on ensuring military power, have now added good governance and democracy to their theories and programs.<sup>9</sup> Today's information technology revolution greatly affects political communication. While debates are currently underway on PD in the US, as in many other countries, emphasis should be initially put on a basic and workable definition or a common denominator on the concept. A clear-cut understanding of what PD stands for would lead to building relevant recommendations and strategies for a functional Palestinian PD.

## 1.2. Public Diplomacy Vs. "Traditional" Diplomacy

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<sup>6</sup> Library of Congress Study of US International and Cultural Programs Activities, [www.publicdiplomacy.com](http://www.publicdiplomacy.com)

<sup>7</sup> "Soft power is the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals. It differs from hard power, the ability to use the carrot and sticks of economic and military might to make others follow your will". Joseph Jr. Nye, "Propaganda isn't the way", Editorial. The International Herald Tribune, 10 January 2003

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Samir Amin, "The National State and Obstacles of Globalisation in the Arab World", Afro Arab Research Center Cairo, Strategic Research and Studies Center, Damascus, 2004

<sup>9</sup> Charles T. Call & Susan E. Cook, "Global Governance, a Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations", Lynne Rienner, Vol. 9, No.2., April-June 2003

Diplomacy, in its multilayered meaning, is a formulation and implementation of foreign politics, international negotiations and professional activity, all performed by diplomats.<sup>10</sup> One can simply define Diplomacy as a primary method with which foreign policy is realized. Foreign Policy is a formulation and a direction, and Diplomacy is a communication and a realization.<sup>11</sup> Diplomacy is responsible for managing the relations between countries and ensuring specific and wide interests.<sup>12</sup>

How can we then locate the concept of PD? Signitzer and Coombs view PD as "...a way, with which the government and the private individuals and groups can directly or indirectly influence those public opinions and positions, which directly influence the foreign politics decisions of another government."<sup>13</sup> The US Information Agency (USAI) offers the following definition for Public Diplomacy: Public Diplomacy means: "To understand, inform, and influence foreign publics in the promotion of the national interest and to broaden the dialogue between Americans and US institutions and their counterparts abroad."<sup>14</sup>

Within such understanding, PD is widening its field of traditional diplomatic activities: from the closed sphere of governments and diplomats on new actors and target groups; i.e. individuals, groups and organizations that are joining international

<sup>10</sup> Harold Nicholson, "Diplomacy", Washington, Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Georgetown University, 1988)

<sup>11</sup> William C. Olson, "The Theory and Practice of International Relations", NJ, Prentice Hall, 1991

<sup>12</sup> R.P. Barston, "Modern Diplomacy", London, NY, Longman, 1988

<sup>13</sup> Benno H. Signitzer and Timothy Coombs, "Public Relations and Public Diplomacy: Conceptual Convergences", PR Review 8, 1992

<sup>14</sup> Pam Smith, Minster Counselor for Public Affairs, US Embassy, London

and intercultural communications activities and that have influence on the political relations between countries. Similarly, Hans N. Tuch defines PD as "a government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies."<sup>15</sup>

These definitions entail that PD is mainly a state sponsored program designed to inform and/or influence public opinion in other countries. It concentrates on official government's efforts to shape the communications environment overseas in which foreign policy is played out with a view to reducing misperceptions and misunderstandings about one's country.

"PD differs from traditional Diplomacy in that it involves interactions not only with governments but primarily with non-governmental individuals and organizations."<sup>16</sup> As elaborated also by Tuch, PD presupposes an open communication process, which is based on the principle of publicity and is trying to speak to the public, as opposed to the traditional diplomacy, characterized by secrecy and exclusivity.<sup>17</sup> Gilboa also describes PD in the sense of content as activities in the field of informing and educating, as a guide to foreign countries with a purpose of influencing foreign governments through influencing their citizens.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Hans N. Tuch "Communicating with the world", St. Martin's Press, NY, 1990

<sup>16</sup> Edward Murrow, 1963, speaking as Director of USIA, quoted in Mark Leonard, "Public Diplomacy", Foreign Policy Center, 2002

<sup>17</sup> Hans N. Tuch "Communicating with the world", St. Martin's Press, NY, 1990

<sup>18</sup> Eytan Gilboa, "Diplomacy in the Media Age: Three Models of Uses and Effects", 2001

Furthermore, traditional Diplomacy is often characterized by confidentiality; whereas publicity is the inherent purpose of PD.<sup>19</sup>

Most of the authors who wrote in this field have therefore agreed on the desired effects of diverse activities of PD intended to make the transmitted messages being heard, accepted and understood, and to create and consolidate a positive image, a good reputation and a favorable international position of one's home country. PD can therefore be defined as different forms of convincing communications with foreign publics in the context of fulfilling the goals of foreign politics. It also suggests tools of feeding off the general image of a country – for example, Norway's reputation for international mediation helped persuade conflict areas that Norway is an honest broker. PD also provides methods for lobbyists to shape public opinion around the world. While traditional diplomacy is the management of relations between countries, engaging one government with another government; PD, however, moves away from the center of government out into society. It includes interaction not only with the government but also with individuals and non governmental organizations. In fact, in our context of communications technology, Foreign Affairs is no longer the preserve of a few governmental élites - it has become increasingly shared by Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), businesses and other non-state actors. When a Palestinian student conducts a research or attends a training at Amideast or any US information center in Jerusalem, Ramallah or Gaza, he or she is using a service provided by US public diplomats. When Birzeit University offers the Palestine Arab Studies (PAS)

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<sup>19</sup> Hans N. Tuch "Communicating with the world", St. Martin's Press, NY, 1990

program to teach Arabic language to foreigners, Palestinian PD is operating. When a French artist is on a tour in Palestine, this is PD. These are but a few of the wide scope of activities involved in PD. It can therefore be employed either by the State or by non-state actors. The latter are more and more taking the lead over or complementing states' performance. PD is viewed as a state sponsored program notwithstanding engaging non state actors in other countries.

### **1.3. Public Diplomacy Vs. Propaganda**

The Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (1990) offers the following definition for "propaganda": It is "information, frequently exaggerated or false information, which is spread by political groups in order to influence the public". The aim of PD and Propaganda is similar: it is to win people over to a given set of ideas. However, propaganda means information based on falsehoods and untruths. PD does not have such negative connotation – it should be based on known fact; otherwise, the reliability of information would be questioned. As Edward R. Murrow puts it: "...to be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful..."<sup>20</sup> It is a fact that PD does not only consist of informing with the aim of transmitting objective information, but is rather mainly defined by its intentional persuasion. The latter means that the messenger is trying to influence the public to accept proposed positions and behavior. Tuch

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<sup>20</sup> Edward R. Murrow is Director of USIA, May 1963 [www.publicdiplomacy.com](http://www.publicdiplomacy.com)

argues that propaganda would be the appropriate term if used in its original meaning, and not burdened with discomfort and negative connotations. On the other hand, the proliferation of information in societies hampers the government's control of information: this means that governmental attempts to distort the reality will immediately be exposed, leading to skepticism of governmental claims. In fact, ideas that people get about a country are beyond governmental control because of the fundamental role played by the media, books, CDs, etc... in spreading information. Simultaneously, the government's role in promoting PD should be to facilitate the transmission of positive images and messages about the country. More precisely, the President gives directives on Diplomatic and Foreign Policy issues. Taking the American model, PD and inextricably Foreign Policy are conducted by the President. The latter is the central and key figure in Foreign Policy. The role of parties is taken into consideration; however, the President is preeminent in the domain of Foreign Policy, because he/she places national interests ahead of party interests.<sup>21</sup> The government's role in PD can also be directed at the academic level: the US PD Council is a good case in point – it serves as a resource for the teaching, training, and development of PD as an academic discipline.<sup>22</sup>

#### **1.4. Is Public Diplomacy Soft Power?**

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<sup>21</sup> John W. Spanier, Eric M. Uslaner, "American Foreign Policy Making and the Democratic Dilemmas", Macmillan Publishing Company, NY, Maxwell Macmillan, Canada, Sixth Edition, 1994

<sup>22</sup> "Engaging the Arab & Islamic Worlds through Public Diplomacy", William A. Rugh, Public Diplomacy Council, 2004

Broadly speaking, "Power" lies in the capacity to do things; i.e. the ability to get the outcomes one wants. But Power is also the ability to affect behaviors of others to achieve those things. "So more specifically, power is the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the outcomes one wants. But there are several ways to affect the behavior of others. You can coerce them with threats; you can induce them with payments; or you can attract and co-opt them to want what you want." <sup>23</sup>

Joseph Nye coined the term "Soft Power" (SP) in the late 1980ies. SP lies in the ability to attract, persuade, and shape the preferences of others<sup>24</sup>; on the other hand, Hard Power is the use of military or economic might of a country. Hard Power remains important in a world of states trying to guard their independence and of non-state groups willing to turn to armed resistance. The current Palestinian conundrum lies in the fact that military resistance groups focus heavily on military power to force Israel do the Palestinian will; while the Palestinian leadership pays too little heed to Public Diplomacy or SP

SP is "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen legitimate in the eyes of others, our SP is enhanced." <sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Joseph Nye, "Soft Power", The Means to Success in World Politics, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. 2004 Public Affairs New York

<sup>24</sup> Joseph Nye, "Soft Power", The Means to Success in World Politics, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. 2004 Public Affairs New York

<sup>25</sup> Joseph Nye, "Soft Power", The Means to Success in World Politics, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. 2004 Public Affairs New York

SP is an important reality, recognized even by the British realist, E.H. Carr who described power as having a trilateral significance: military, economic and power over opinion.<sup>26</sup> According to Nye, a country may have hard power (i.e. economic and military might as a way to establish empires and institutions); however its SP could decline if brutal policies are used to achieve its objectives. Nye also argues that hard power tools are not sufficient to achieve national interests. He even goes far to say that a country could enjoy political clout even if its military and economic weight are diminished. Norway and Switzerland are a good case in point. Bernard Bot further explains the necessity for Europe to exercise military power and make it consonant with soft diplomatic power to gain Arab support in the aftermath of the American invasion of Iraq.<sup>27</sup> This bears witness to the validity of the concept of SF.

Mark Leonard argues that there are three dimensions of PD that governments should pursue in order to engage people in one's cause and convince politicians to take one's stand. These three dimensions happen to coincide with three characteristics of Soft Power, advanced by Joseph Nye:

### **1. News Management:**

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<sup>26</sup> E.H. Carr, "The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the

Study of International Relations". 1939 London: Macmillan

<sup>27</sup> Bernard Bot, "Europe Must Exercise Both Soft and Hard Power", European Affairs, Spring 2004, Volume 5, No. 2



Plugged into the government machine, news is the management of communication on day-to-day issues. Governments should react to news events as they occur in a way that tallies with the strategic goals. It is necessary to contextualize stories in the news coverage. In this regard, Israel has enormously succeeded. In June 2005, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon reiterated Israel's intention to build 3,500 additional units of housing for Jewish settlers in the Palestinian West Bank while demanding at the same time that the Palestinian leadership do more to dismantle what the Israeli leader refers to as the "terror infrastructure." When the term, "infrastructure of terror" is employed by Sharon in different media outlets, it is not only an emotionally charged metaphor, but it also suggests that the only obstruction to peace between Israel and the Palestinian people is the "infrastructure of terror". When invoked by Israel, this strong slogan empties the conflict of all references to the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory, despite his open intentions of illegally constructing new settlements. Unlike the Israeli imposed narrative, Palestinians have not produced any charged terms to expose their cause and challenge the Israeli accounts. Not only the Palestinian terminology has been absent, but the use of weapons by Palestinians in supposedly peaceful marches is a scene highly portrayed in the various international media.

The first dimension outlined by Leonard can be combined with the first source of SP suggested by Nye. The latter gave importance to "cultural contact as a means of combating negative impressions."<sup>28</sup> He distinguishes two types of cultures: "high

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<sup>28</sup> George Kennan (US Diplomat and writer), quoted in Nye's "Soft Power"

culture" (literary and artistic education for the Elites) is aimed at achieving desired outcomes among policy makers in the short run (for example international students return home with a great appreciation of Palestinian values); and "popular culture" which serves to enhance SP through images portrayed by television, cinema and/or other media outlets. In this sense, the two concepts of PD and SP are similar in the use of news management to achieve desired outcomes through media.

## **2. Strategic Communications:**

Strategic Communications is a medium term planning of news agenda. Unlike the first dimension, which aims at contextualizing and reacting to unexpected events, this second dimension is rather a proactive creation of news through activities and events designed to reinforce messages and influence foreign public's perceptions. This also goes in parallel with Nye's second source of SP. Nye suggests that domestic values and policies (such as human rights, democracy, tolerance and other powerful sources of attraction) be adopted in the media to enhance the image of a state and to advance its foreign policy. Palestinians must proactively work with the media and create their own news to get their story told. In the media, the mantra is Palestinian terrorism and Israeli insecurity.<sup>29</sup> Because of the distortion of realities due to the potent Israeli lobby and monopoly over many International Media outlets, Palestinians and activists should reveal the hardships facing the Palestinian population under the Israeli occupation. In addition, Palestinians should not only

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<sup>29</sup> Edward Said, "Culture and Resistance", South End Press, Cambridge Massachussets, 2003

communicate their stances on issues, but they should also manage the perceptions of the viewer or the reader. If interviewed on CNN, Palestinian speakers must address the problematic and common perceptions of Palestinians in particular and Arabs in general as terrorists. The ideal solution for a country, Leonard argues, is to have one single clear narrative which can unite all different audiences. This is not a simple task but it should be part of an organized planning of how to "brand" Palestinians as part of the government's media machine.

### **3. Relations Building:**

This third long-term dimension developed by Leonard concerns two target groups: building lasting relationships with the country's citizens overseas on the one hand and foreign key individuals. In the Palestinian case, this third factor of PD involves Palestinians in the Diaspora and refugees who would represent the Palestinian values to positively attract the public in their resident country to our side. The other element of relations building is the need to develop lasting relationships with individuals (through scholarships, exchanges, training, conferences, etc...). Again this falls within the third source of SP devised by Nye, which is Foreign Policy Substance and Style. "...policies that express important values are more likely to be attractive when the values are shared."<sup>30</sup> The attractiveness highly depends on the values we tend to transmit and express through the substance and style of our

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<sup>30</sup> Joseph Nye, "Soft Power", *The Means to Success in World Politics*, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. 2004 Public Affairs New York

foreign policy. This approach involves nurturing contacts with others through genuine exchange that portrays a detailed picture of a country.

According to Nye, the world today is diverse because it is composed of states with advanced democracies and others with weak institutions and authoritarian rulers. He distinguishes three main sources of power: military, economic and soft power. Nye adds that the global information age will enhance the importance of soft power.

"The countries that are likely to be more attractive and gain soft power in the information age are those with multiple channels of communication that help to frame issues; whose dominant culture and ideas are closer to prevailing global norms (which now emphasize liberalism, pluralism, and autonomy); and whose credibility is enhanced by their domestic and international values and policies."<sup>31</sup> In the following chapter, we will tackle the sources of Palestinian Soft Power that could be potentially utilized as part of governmental and non governmental policies.

### **1.5. Neorealism and Institutionalism: where does PD stand?**

While the two schools have not directly tackled PD, assumptions will be made according to the essence of each school.

#### **1.5.1. Neorealism:**

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<sup>31</sup> *ibid*

Extended from the Classical Realist School, Neo Realism revolves around man's eradicable lust for power, or "animus dominandi". Political behaviors, according to this theory, rest on egoism because men are competing for scarce resources, mainly for power.<sup>32</sup> Neorealists view the world as being characterized by its anarchic nature. Unlike domestic politics, international politics takes place in an arena that has no central governmental body. From this central fact, flow important consequences for the behavior of states. Dark defines anarchy as "the absence of a world government to oversee the actions of state".<sup>33</sup> Lack of international hierarchy in authority leads states to independently set their agenda, based on their national self interests. Although states can make commitments and treaties, there is no sovereign power to ensure compliance or punish deviations. Because the international system lacks a central agency and because the roles of international institutions are limited (due to the fact that they only serve the great powers), the state, or the "actor", which is a unit in this anarchic system, performs actions that are governed by its decision making domestically. Neorealists argue that the unit (i.e. the state) should function as a unitary body with one voice. Since states cannot look to a supreme body to enforce laws, they must rely on their own efforts. According to Rosenau, states must preserve their independence and well-being in a self help system generated by the absence of a higher

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<sup>32</sup> Kenneth Waltz, "Man, the State and War", NY, Columbia University Press, 1959

<sup>33</sup> K.R. Dark, "The Waves of Time, Long-term Change and International Relations", NY: Continuum, 1998

authority to maintain world justice and order. A state should maximize its power in comparison to other units.<sup>34</sup> Waltz adds that in a self help system, where conflicts are expected to occur, states should be concerned with the means to sustain and protect themselves.<sup>35</sup>

For Neorealists, the international system is divided into two main components: the System or Structure and the Unit. The former contains all the states with their differing capabilities and interactions; while the latter is the state. Baldwin argues that the international structure (i.e. the other units and their interactions) could provide opportunities for the actor but it could also add some constraints.<sup>36</sup>

States, according to Neorealists, should depend on the means they can generate and the arrangements they can make for themselves in this anarchical system. As outlined by Dougherty, states operate according to the resources and the means they can utilize to ensure their survival and preserve their security.<sup>37</sup> Also, Dougherty argues that for a state to operate efficiently, it must grasp the relationships between units in the structure.

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<sup>34</sup> James N. Rosenau, "Innovation and Transformation in International Studies", Stephen Gill & James H. Mittelman ed. UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997

<sup>35</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, "Man, the State and War", Columbia University Press, NY, 2001

<sup>36</sup> David Baldwin, "Neoliberalism and Neorealism: the Contemporary Debate", NY, Columbia University Press, 1993

<sup>37</sup> James E Dougherty and Robert L Pfaltzgraff, "Contending Theories of International Relations, a comprehensive survey. USA: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers. 1997. 4<sup>th</sup> ed.

Security and therefore Power is the essence for the Neorealist theory; but how to acquire, preserve and expand it essentially depends on the state's position in the global power configuration. According to Waltz, the national interests conduct the state's foreign policy. The national interests of a state range from survival (minimum goal) to domination (maximum goal). For Dougherty, states achieve their objectives either through increasing their internal capabilities or through strengthening their alliances and weakening their opponents.<sup>38</sup>

In an anarchical self help environment in which states are subject to unexpected structural variations, states act on the basis of struggle for survival.<sup>39</sup> On the same note, Lebow argues that despite the international state of lawlessness, each unit (or state) adapts itself to the structure of the system in which it operates.<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, Neorealists believe that powerful states (such as the USA) use their economic might as an essential instrument of statecraft in order to ensure and boost their security. The more capacities are enhanced, the more powerful and secure the state becomes. According to Grieco, uncertainties (about future structural variations and other units' intentions) lead states to improve their capacities as a form of guarantee to security and independence.<sup>41</sup> Anarchy leads

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<sup>38</sup> James E Dougherty and Robert L Pfaltzgraff, "Contending Theories of International Relations, a comprehensive survey. USA: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers<sup>4th</sup> ed. 1997.

<sup>39</sup> Paul Viotti and Mark Kaupli, " International Relations Theory, Realism, Pluralism, Globalism and Beyond", ed. 3ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999

<sup>40</sup> Richard Ned Lebow, " International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War", NY, Columbia University Press, 1995

to uncertainty and war; hence the struggle for power<sup>42</sup>, and the necessity to consider security issues.

As for the role of institutions, Neorealists argue that international institutions are conditioned by the anarchic nature of the International System. Institutions arose only to achieve the goals of the powerful states. For neorealists, institutions are nothing but a representation of the true power or shadow powers, reflecting the real power distribution in the structure of the system. State interests are above institutions.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, institutions were created to serve the needs of the most powerful states.<sup>44</sup> For this school of thought, the power distribution in the international structure is the essence: states are the principal actors; whereas non-state actors such as international organizations, the United Nations, the Security Council, etc... are dependent on strong states that determine their functions.

Neorealism views institutions as permissive and subservient to power politics, lacking enforcement mechanisms that are independent of state interests.<sup>45</sup>

Institutions cannot prevent wars or achieve peace through changing states'

behaviors – the current US war on Iraq provides good example. For neorealists,

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<sup>41</sup> Joseph M. Grieco, "Neoliberalism and Neorealism: the Contemporary Debate", NY, Columbia University Press, 1993

<sup>42</sup> Arnold Wolfers, "International Politics: Anarchy, Force, Economy and Decision-Making", USA: Harper Collins Publishers, 1985

<sup>43</sup> Kenneth Waltz, "Theory of International Politics", ? 1979

<sup>44</sup> K.R. Dark, "The Waves of Time, Long-term Change and International Relations", NY: Continuum, 1998

<sup>45</sup> Michael N. Barnett, "Conceptual Foundations of International Politics", Vol I, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, Fall 1997, Foreign Affairs Customs Anthology



institutions cannot create a change. The latter can only be achieved through the rise and fall of the great powers that are in constant competition with each other.<sup>46</sup> Change in the International System is associated with the capacities of each of the unit (state) of the structure. States make their own cost-benefit calculations; if benefits exceed costs, the state will make the change.

Going back to the anarchic characteristic of the system, war is a recurrent and logical resultant in international relations. Because each state strives to achieve its own national interests, it might require using force depending on its power. Each state is a judge of its own cause and therefore decides to use force or "hard power" to enforce its own judgment.<sup>47</sup>

Neorealism is a school of thought that strongly believes that International Relations primarily revolve around security and economic matters. The basic assumptions of neorealists are that states are the main actors and that the national interest of a state is to be pursued. In addition, power, measured in terms of military and economic capability, is the clue to analyzing politics. The internal organization of the state is not given importance. For neorealists, there is no central agency; hence the International System is shared by anarchy. While the state acts for its survival, it should simultaneously "struggle for power", as

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<sup>46</sup> K.R. Dark, "The Waves of Time, Long-term Change and International Relations", NY: Continuum, 1998

<sup>47</sup> Kenneth Waltz, "Man, the State and War", NY, Columbia University Press, 1959

Morgenthau<sup>48</sup> puts it. Wars break out because of a growth in power; the state should therefore take countermeasures to build up its military strength. For neorealists, power is the only relevant factor in politics. In addition to power (defined as military or economic capability of the state or as the state's influence or willingness to use its capabilities over another state), realists use "system" as patterns of interaction and anarchy. The system as interaction means that states interact in order to predict the behavior of each other: the patterns of behavior between and among states are the basis for prediction.

Neorealists also present an anarchic structure of the system to explain that states are sovereign and exercise complete authority over their territories. The absence of a central authority explains why states rely on power and seek to preserve and even increase their power position. States are therefore in a consistent security dilemma: how can a state know that a rival is arming strictly for defensive purposes? Distrust therefore characterizes the relationship among states. This situation reinforces misunderstandings among states and could even lead to "imagined hostility".<sup>49</sup> In the International System, alliance building should be established in order to avoid the triumph of a dominant power. For neorealists, a hegemonic state facilitates the achievement of collaboration among states. The "realist assumptions that states are egoistic rational actors operating on the basis

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<sup>48</sup> Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*

<sup>49</sup> Robert Jervis, "Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics", Princeton University Press, NJ, 1976

of their own conceptions of self interest" <sup>50</sup> underlies the importance of powerful means to use against potential outside threat – PD could be such a tool if military strength is absent.

For Neorealists, Diplomacy is an important element of national power. The State (leading the local public opinion) should set itself goals which it has the ability to achieve. Again, the objectives of foreign policy must be defined only terms of the state's national interest.<sup>51</sup>

### **1.5.2. Institutionalism:**

This school of thought is derived from Liberalism, identified with an essential principle: freedom of the individual. This principle has generated rights and institutions. Institutionalism focuses on state interactions that would lead to their cooperation. The role of international institutions is to produce norms and rules with

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<sup>50</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "After Hegemony" Cooperation & Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ 1984

<sup>51</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *The Future of Diplomacy*, In Robert C. Art, Robert Jervis, "International Politics", Fourth Edition, Harper, Collins College Publishers, 1996

a view to managing state interactions.<sup>52</sup> For institutionalists, issues that enhance cooperation are the most primordial ones. Institutional scholar study the conditions required to reach international cooperation, leading to reciprocal benefits.

Cooperation already exists on a number of low level politics, such as unemployment problems, food allocation and other socio-economic issues. Such cooperation in low politics is mainly functioned through international agencies. Institutions are not only "formal organizations with headquarters buildings and specialized staffs" but more as "patterns of practice" affecting state behavior.<sup>53</sup>

Like Neorealists, Institutionalists believe that the International system is anarchic, "in the sense that it lacks an authoritative government that can enact and enforce rules of behavior."<sup>54</sup> In other words, states exist in a lawlessness situation where there is no body to impose norms; but where there is room for states to adopt game theoretic applications in order to achieve mutual interests, enhance their welfare and maximize their profit.<sup>55</sup> For a state to decide whether to cooperate or defect with another state, they should devise a strategy depending on the other actor's strategy.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> John A. Vasquez, "The Power of Power Politics, From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism", UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

<sup>53</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "After Hegemony" Cooperation & Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ 1984

<sup>54</sup> *ibid*

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<sup>56</sup> Robert Axelrod & Robert Keohane, "Achieving Cooperation Under Anarchy:

Strategies and Institutions". In Neoliberalism and Neorealism: the Contemporary Debate, David Baldwin, ed. New York: Columbia

Cooperation, Institutionalists argue, can only be realized through institutions. In fact, as their name suggests, Institutionalists have stressed the importance of institutions in organizing and managing state's interactions. Although international institutions appear to be state-centric, they embody non-state actors, such as the NATO (security body), the IMF (economic system) or Green Peace (environmental organization).<sup>57</sup> Therefore, despite the absence of an international central body to enforce rules, there are a number of institutions that play the role of a governing body.<sup>58</sup> On the same note, Stern advances that International Law is an essential organization setting binding rules and norms and prescribing specific modes of conduct for states. The International Court of Justice is a case in point. Although states are still predominant in the international scene, their interdependence impels them to look for long-term aims and multilateral cooperation. Although states unilaterally pursue their own interests in some issues, they still have to allot some kind of authority to international institutions. Thus, the anarchic order of the International System exists in parallel with balanced constraints imposed on states to achieve cooperation and to reduce their search for self interests only. Institutionalists argue that the establishment of rules and institutions has narrowed down state's seeking out their self interests.<sup>59</sup>

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University Press 1993

<sup>57</sup> James E Dougherty and Robert L Pfaltzgraff, "Contending Theories of International Relations, a comprehensive survey. USA: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers. 1997. 4<sup>th</sup> ed.

<sup>58</sup> John A. Vasquez, "The Power of Power Politics, From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism", UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

<sup>59</sup> Geoffrey Stern, "The Structure of International Society, An Introduction to the Study of International Relations", 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. UK: Continuum, 2000

Institutions are not a reflection of the balance of power present in the International System as Neorealists claim; institutions have the power to mitigate anarchy and to change the distribution of power of actors. Vasquez goes far to say that institutions help in resolving disputes, paving the way for cooperation among states.<sup>60</sup> On the other hand, Institutionalists argue that states' shared interests feed their cooperation. The notion of interdependence through cooperation is highly stressed here. As Dougherty argues, interdependence refers to individuals or groups that play different roles in various systems.<sup>61</sup> Cooperation can be realized through game theory in terms of the Prisoner's Dilemma; i.e. two actors could benefit from cooperation but fail to achieve cooperation due to the patterns of incentives generated by the structure of strategic interaction between among units.<sup>62</sup> Keohane argues that defection (failure to achieve cooperation) depends on the number of times the game is played. The fewer times it is played, the more likely defection will be the dominant strategy. If the game is, however, played iteratively, cooperation between actors can rationally emerge if actors value future rewards.<sup>63</sup> Why? Because in an iterated Prisoner's Dilemma, mutual cooperation develops around a strategy of "tit-for-tat" between rational players. Iterated games between players is the most appropriate game

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<sup>60</sup> John A. Vasquez, "The Power of Power Politics, From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism", UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998

<sup>61</sup> James E Dougherty and Robert L Pfaltzgraff, "Contending Theories of International Relations, a comprehensive survey. USA: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers. 1997. 4<sup>th</sup> ed.

<sup>62</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "After Hegemony" Cooperation & Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ 1984

<sup>63</sup> *ibid*

model, according to Keohane, because it allows each actor to better understand the routine diplomatic conduct of the other actor.

So where does PD stand? One can consider the possibility of a synthesis between the two theories. In fact, if interconnected together, both Neorealism and Institutionalism yield valuable insights about PD. Both theories agree that states are the main actors in the International System and that anarchy emanated from the interactions of units. They also concur that states are propelled by their own self interests. However, the two theories identify different mechanisms through which units interact within the International System. For Neorealists, the interactions occur on the basis of rational behavior. In other words, units that behave rationally "possess consistent, ordered preferences, and... calculate the costs of benefits of alternatives... in order to maximize their utility..."<sup>64</sup> Institutionalists, however, give particular importance to institutions in facilitating states' interactions. Neorealism views institutions as constraints for states' operations; while Institutionalism considers institutions to be acting as facilitators for states' functions. The dividing line between Neorealism and Institutionalism therefore concerns how institutions affect state behavior. The two theoretical approaches can be incorporated to formulate a comprehensive framework, leading to a better understanding of Foreign Policy and PD. In fact, adopting one single theory does not suffice to explore Foreign Policy and PD. We will therefore take the Neorealist stand of treating state as a principal actor and the major player in PD and the Institutionalists' assumption

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<sup>64</sup> *ibid*

that international institutions have become fundamental actors for political analysis. As Keohane puts it: "Realism, at the best of times, only gives a one-sided and simplified model of foreign policy,... Other theoretical approaches, notably institutionalism and constructivism, are needed to explain foreign policy, not just as a supplement to the dominant realist paradigm, but as vital ingredients to any credible explanation of a state's conduct in the international system."<sup>65</sup> Both schools of thought are complementary in the understanding of the concept of PD: while the latter refers to the government's actions to generate support for the national security objectives, it should also be designed to cover other aspects of interests, such as the economic, social and cultural ones – all being essential elements of foreign policy.

In summary, after exploring the various definitions of PD and incorporating the concept within the two theories, we can deduce that a "skilled" PD should therefore be an instrument used by the State to serve the national interests and aspirations of that same state. To function properly and on a wider scale, PD involves different actors, ranging from public and private bodies, to local and international Non Governmental Organizations, and media outlets, all acting together to advance the state's foreign policy objectives and to improve the State's image abroad.

### **1.6. Why do we need PD?**

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<sup>65</sup> *ibid*



Malcolm Kerr made relevant observations about the misconceptions pervading the Palestinian Israeli conflict. Kerr argues that "a body of assumptions and misconceptions, rarely challenged or debated, had grown up about the origins of the conflict, and serious discourse had ceased among the public and except in rare instances among policymakers as well."<sup>66</sup> In fact, Palestinians have not won the propaganda battle with Israel in the West. Although the facts of the Palestinian reality are well known and well documented, it is still the Israeli narrative which is the predominant one. There are many reasons for this. Not all of them have to do with Palestinian failures to accurately present their case. Fighting against the Israeli narrative is not easy because there are religious and political ties and mutual interests between Israel and the US and Europe which are beyond the reach of Palestinians. Because any country's foreign policies are designed to serve that country's national interests, they will cause conflicts when they run counter to the interests of others. Therefore, governments should mitigate the tensions caused by any conflict of interest by implementing drastic PD campaigns. Palestine has been particularly lax in this regard: no effective medium has been put into place through which to get the message across to the West.<sup>67</sup> For example, the Palestinian dispossession (1948 Nakba) is, to a great extent, an unrecognizable episode in the Western media and history. The Israeli version of the claims to the Palestinian land has prevailed in the international discourse. Another example of misrepresenting the Palestinian plight is the constant repetition (which has become THE TRUE STORY) of Palestinians fleeing their homes in 1948 because the Palestinian leadership gave

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<sup>66</sup> Kathleen Christison, "Perceptions of Palestine", University of California Press, 1999

<sup>67</sup> *ibid*

people orders to leave. This propaganda was successfully circulated to reach the Western perceptions. While the Israeli perspective was a dominant one in the Western mind, there was no room for the Palestinian standpoint. However, Israel's version and media supremacy of the events can still be challenged. This is where PD is positioned. There is still an opportunity to push the Palestinian narrative to the front. In addition to this reason related to the Palestinian peculiar case, there are other reasons for PD. The first reason is the global rise in the power of individual citizens in the policy making process.

Today's communication revolution has allowed an instantaneous flow of information reaching large publics everywhere, disregarding physical national boundaries, and directly affecting the formation of public attitudes. Public opinion has become an important factor in International Relations because it exerts pressure on governments' decisions and actions.<sup>68</sup> The universal reach of media and information technology (especially the wrenching of images on televisions and the internet based news agency) has an immediate effect on states' policy.

The second reason for the rise of PD is the new ideological dimensions of international conflicts. There is a big competition among states and groups to promulgate their policies and penetrate the human thinking. This reason applies to most Arab and Islamic states after the 9/11 tragic events, which have exacerbated

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<sup>68</sup> Hans N. Tuch "Communicating with the world", St. Martin's Press, NY, 1990

ideological conflicts and have required that Arabs and Muslims rehabilitate their image in the West.

### **1.7. How does PD function?**

In his "Pillars of Public Diplomacy"<sup>69</sup> article, Christopher Ross presents a basic set of principles and practices, what he calls "the seven pillars of PD". These principles guide the State's (in this case Palestine) adoption and engagement in an efficient PD that would benefit its foreign policy:

1. The first principle is "Policy Advocacy", i.e. the first responsibility must be to ensure that international audiences understand Palestine. PD is incorporated in foreign policy; it is integrated in the process of policy formulation and implementation of the government.
2. The second pillar of PD is "Reasons & Rationale": governments must build genuine understanding and common ground with the outside world.
3. Thirdly, the government should develop consistent and truthful information message, or what the author terms as

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<sup>69</sup> Christopher Ross, "Pillars of Public Diplomacy: grappling with international public opinion", [www.questia.com](http://www.questia.com)

"Tailoring Credibility". PD must be based on honesty, openness and trust in order to be successful.

4. The fourth pillar concerns the audience – different messages should be employed separately to each group of audiences (the messenger should be skilful and knowledgeable of different interest groups); the message employed will be different if addressed to a religious group from the message sent to representatives of the private sector, for example. Furthermore, tailoring the message to specific audiences should be swift because silence is vacuum rapidly filled by media outlets with the opponent view.

5. The fifth principal guideline for PD is "Mass Media". In other words, states should seek out channels to reach broader audiences through all available types of communications channels: the internet based media, broadcasting, print publications and press, traveling speakers and educational and cultural exchanges.

6. A sixth vital element to be taken into account when implementing PD is the internal alliances and partnerships; for example establishing partnerships with the private sector (through the involvement of local Public Relations firms), with Non

Governmental Organizations and Palestinians in the diaspora would be an added value because it would offer a third party authenticity.

7. Finally, the most obvious yet elusive factor is the launch of dialogues and exchanges with the outside world. It is essentially important to listen to the world and speak to it because it will create avenues for dialogue and will pave the way for advocacy of Palestinian policies as clearly and powerfully as possible. Here, the author puts emphasis on the delivery of messages in a proper context.

Hence, PD is a multi-layered process involving a multitude of actors, numerous ways of communication and several guiding principles. All these inextricable components of PD are advanced by the state. These multifaceted dynamics characterizing PD serve as a framework for PD practical activities which will be tackled in the next paragraph.

Drawing on her experience as an American practitioner in the field, Pamela Smith describes two major PD programs conducted: information programs and cultural and educational programs.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> [www.diplomacy.edu](http://www.diplomacy.edu)

### 1. **Information Programs:**

This program concerns the media (see paragraph on "the role of the media") and the functions of diplomatic missions as defined by the Vienna Convention on the Diplomatic relations.<sup>71</sup> The latter identifies the role of the diplomat, as representative of the sender state within the host state, getting acquainted with the courses of events within the host state and reporting on it to the government of the sender state, while simultaneously advancing and developing friendly relations with the host state. In practice, this means the following main regular actions are to be performed by government officials and diplomats:

- Government officials should gather all the speeches, position papers, transcripts of press conferences or any public announcements of the government. All these materials should be compiled and sent electronically to all the embassies abroad; they should also be posted on the government's website for immediate access to the information. Additionally, such information should be translated into world languages.
- Government officials develop strategies on how best to convey their positions on important issues.

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<sup>71</sup> <http://www.un.org/law/ilc/texts/diplomat.htm>

- Diplomats at embassies overseas manage the dissemination locally of all the material coming from the sender state. Dissemination is not only at the official level, it spreads to civil organizations and individuals with high sensitivity to local issues and concerns and by means of using the local language in a fluent manner.
- The Government's Information Program also includes responding to public inquiries about one's own countries. This means that diplomats act as the information front ends of their governments by responding to large amounts of queries on a daily basis.

## **2. Cultural and Educational Programs:**

Cultural and Educational Programs are important long term components of PD, providing a deep understanding of a country's society, values, institutions and motives for forming its official positions. Such programs (performed by state and non state actors) stand on a principle that information and cultural programs must circumvent the momentary goals of foreign politics and focus on highest national goals. These include, among other things:

- Organizing workshops and/or academic exchange programs and inviting foreign researchers, students and professors to strengthen bonds of understanding the Palestinian situation.

- Sending artists abroad to attend an exhibition or to perform the country's popular dances and music is another important cultural component.
- Using modern communications technology to apply PD and expose the cultural richness of Palestine.

In a similar vein, Mark Leonard has developed an interesting understanding of PD, being "based on the premise that the image and reputation of a country are public goods which can create either an enabling or a disabling environment for individual transaction... the global anti-capitalist demonstrations have illustrated a new diplomatic environment where state and non-state actors compete for the public's attention".<sup>72</sup> In fact, states are striving for the best holistic presentation, promotion and "branding". By "branding" is meant that states are competing for the affection of the public like market brands; by ascribing an emotional value to a country, people can identify with it.<sup>73</sup>

Today's PD is operated on a dual scale: traditional diplomacy is preserved as defined by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, while simultaneously enlarging its operation through networking with various non state actors, communicating

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<sup>72</sup> Mark Leonard, "Public Diplomacy", Foreign Policy Center, 2002

<sup>73</sup> Ham, Van Peter, "Branding Territory: Inside the Wonderful Worlds of PR and IR Theory. Millenium:.. Journal of International Studies 31, 2002



through different channels and in product marketing manners with the aim of nurturing one's own country.

### **1.8. The role of NGOs**

During the Cold War, Diplomacy and international affairs were mostly conducted by governments. The end of the Cold War allowed non state actors to appear on the scene.

As Jessica T. Matthews puts it:

"The End of the Cold War has brought no mere adjustment among states but a novel redistribution of power among states, markets and civil society.

National governments are not simply losing autonomy in a globalizing economy. They are sharing powers – including political, social, and security roles at the core of sovereignty – with businesses, with international

organizations, and with a multitude of citizens groups, known as non governmental organizations (NGOs).<sup>74</sup>

PD, by involving different actors, presents many differing views as seen by private individuals, organizations, in addition to official governmental views.

Today, the powerful engine of change is the computer and telecommunications revolution, both leading to a relative decline of states and a rise of non state actors. In fact, some scholars claim that the Westphalian system, introduced in 1648, has come

to an end with the elimination of the concentration of power in the hands of states. In the wake of the cold war, local processes and identities have rendered the Westphalian system obsolete.<sup>75</sup> The Westphalian international system is characterized by international mediation through a classical form of diplomacy and a state-centric notion of sovereignty; whereas the new international system is derived from a grass roots movement. The Westphalian system used inadequate approaches because state interests have proven to be manipulated.<sup>76</sup> In fact, NGOs have deeply penetrated into the official decision making. In Palestine, for example, some NGOs complement the Palestinian Authority in the delivery of public services, such as the

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<sup>74</sup> "Conceptual Foundations of International Politics", Volume I, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, Fall 1997

<sup>75</sup> Martin Shaw, "Global Society and Global Responsibility: The Theoretical, Historical, and 'Political Limits' of International Society", 1992

<sup>76</sup> Olivier P. Richmond, "NGOs and an Emerging Form of Peacemaking: Post-Westphalian Approached", International Studies Association, CA, March 2000

Medical Relief which delivers health services or Tamer Institute which delivers educational services.

Neoliberal scholars argue that institutions are "significant because they affect state behavior".<sup>77</sup> Institutions play a vital role in achieving state interests. The recent condemnation of the Israeli Wall built on Palestinian territories by the International Court of Justice in The Hague is a case in point. This international institution served the Palestinian demands for such a denunciation.

In a similar vein, Leonard distinguishes three major non state actors that positively complement the government's PD operations: NGO Diplomacy, Diaspora Diplomacy and Political Parties Diplomacy.

It is necessary to work with NGOs abroad for their effectiveness in communication – in fact, their role has proven to be central in influencing their governments. They possess three key resources that serve the government's foreign policy: they are credible because of their independency, they have experience in marshaling networks to exert pressure in an area (the latest anti-war demonstrations are a good example) and they have the appropriate networks, facilitating advocacy. For example, the Palestinian NGO Network has widely contributed, during the second Palestinian Intifada, in making timely releases of information to the International

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<sup>77</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "After Hegemony" Cooperation & Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ 1984

Community on the Israeli human rights violations, and in confronting the tarnished image of Palestinians in the Western media.<sup>78</sup>

Secondly, citizens in the diaspora represent another added value to the government's PD performance as they can yield advantages to policy makers in the countries they live because they can address decision makers, the public and the media in a cultural language they can understand. Finally, political parties are an important asset, especially when there are exchange programs with outside political parties. This gives a clear idea of the political position, and reflects political pluralism while constructing an image about one's country.

The experience of NGOs in Palestine most probably supercedes that of any other country in conflict areas in the world.<sup>79</sup> Regarding their political role, Palestinian NGOs regarded their work as an integral component of national liberation and the desire for a just government. In essence, Palestinian NGOs served as a shadow government, providing the means and motivation to continue the popular struggle for national values. Palestinian NGOs were the main pillar of development during the pre-Oslo period. They provided services in health, agriculture, education, communications media, information, human rights, women's issues, research and

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<sup>78</sup> Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar, "The Emergence of a Palestinian Globalized Elite, Donors, International Organizations and Local NGOs", Institute of Jerusalem Studies, Muwatin, the Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, Jerusalem, 2005

<sup>79</sup> *ibid*

training programs. At the same time, they played an active role in the popular resistance to the occupation and maintained a steadfast presence through the long, weary years of negligence and repression. These same NGOs attained a high degree of social, developmental, and political status, and also became tools for social evolution. Palestinian NGOs, strengthened by their political affiliations, functioned for 30 years as a substitute for a national authority. The World Bank has estimated that at the end of 1994, NGOs accounted for 60% (by value) of primary health care services, and 50 % of all secondary and tertiary health care services. One hundred percent of programs for disabled people and preschool children, as well as a sizable proportion of agricultural, housing, small business credit, and welfare services were also provided by NGOs. (see [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)) Until the Oslo Accords, to speak of a "non-political NGO" in Palestine was a contradiction in terms. Even nominally apolitical NGOs, because of the political involvement and activism of their staff members, planned and implemented programs within the context of a political vision. NGO vision and strategy focused exclusively on issues relating to social injustice, marginalized groups, inequality, gender issues, education, agriculture, etc. In short, in the absence of a government, their task was to facilitate the building of a civil society<sup>80</sup>. Consequently, Palestinian NGO work was founded on a political identity, and its effectiveness dependent on the political atmosphere within which it worked. Not so in the aftermath of Oslo. The emergence of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has marginalized the role of NGOs until the breakthrough of the Al

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<sup>80</sup> Broadly speaking, Civil Society means "the summarizing term for non-state forms of collective actions", Robert Haas, "Media Today and Tomorrow", The Concept of "Civil Society", Friedrich Naumann Foundation, 2000

Aqsa Intifada. Since 2000, Palestinian NGOs have turned to act as humanitarian agencies in the services of the people and advocacy player, lobbying against the Israeli aggressive policies, each in their own field (Israeli violations on ambulances and medics, on women, children, etc...). The next chapter will tackle the types of coordination between Palestinian NGOs and NGOs abroad to make the Palestinian voice heard, and to turn the foreign audience into advocates of the Palestinian cause.

### **1.9. The role of the media**

The media explosion and the proliferation of information that have buffeted the world in the 1990ies have created an information-intensive global environment where international crises play out directly into domestic issues. Moreover, the media has entered the diplomatic sphere: not only does it respond to the international political events, but it also invades the processes of communication between the governments and the publics about international politics. It is an important tool for state and non-state actors alike. The importance of the media lies in its widespread connection to the public and its speed in conveying a message. It is often the main component of PD for it represents an opportunity for a state (even a small state) to influence and shape international agenda beyond the

hard powers of strong states.<sup>81</sup> With technological advances and the rise of new communication techniques, such as the internet, the media has become the main engine that drives PD. In fact, evaluating the performance of PD depends on the message sent through media outlets.

If we consider the 1920s to be the decade of the transistor and the 1950s the decade of the television, the 1990s were by far the age of satellites and the internet. The latter has played a bigger role than satellite television in providing alternative information to local media, and governments could not restrict this flow of information. In addition, technology has allowed researchers to access libraries throughout the world and students to search for literature. All over the globe, the development of satellite channels has offered an extensive range of news information to a wide group of people.

In the midst of technological advances in mass media and communication, Palestine has not really engaged in an aggressive campaign to promote its image and expose the Israeli lies about the conflict among the Western media. In addition, Palestine has failed to find a unified voice within the media in the West to establish coverage on Palestinian issues. No real Palestinian initiative has been conducted toward the Western media, with "infotainment"<sup>82</sup> or subjects that

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<sup>81</sup> Josef Batora, "Multistakeholder Public Diplomacy of Small and Medium-Sized States: Norway and Canada Compared", University of Oslo, 2005

<sup>82</sup> By infotainment is meant "the presentation of a series of data – true or false, important or trivial – whose main aim is entertaining the public, though it is cloaked by an informative format", Miriam

would be “attractive” and/or sensitive to this audience. For example, personifying stories of Palestinians under the Israeli occupation, or showing how Israel uproots Palestinian trees, or even exposing Palestinian residents who are surrounded by the Wall in Qalqilya and who can no longer see the sun; such facts deeply affect the viewers.

There are several methods to deal with the media in conducting PD, Tuch argues. These methods are considered to be efficient tools to reach out to the foreign public through media outlets. Tuch suggests 9 different methods that need to be tremendously practiced and highlighted in the media<sup>83</sup>:

1. **The Wireless File:**

This component suggests that embassies all over the world issue daily bulletins, comprising the President's speeches and statements, the Parliament's Press Releases, scripts of briefings and press conferences, commentaries from (Palestinian) press, and (Palestinian) foreign relations and policies. This so-called "Wireless File" is a "state-of-the-art communication medium"<sup>84</sup>, providing information and news services for media outlets. Surfing the Israeli Ministry of

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Hinojosa de Girardet, "Media Today and Tomorrow", Infotainment instead of Political Coverage?, Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Robert Haas (ed.), 2000

<sup>83</sup> Hans N. Tuch "Communicating with the world", St. Martin's Press, NY, 1990

<sup>84</sup> *ibid*



Foreign Affairs<sup>85</sup> (note that it is in English, Hebrew and Arabic languages), in addition to all of the above mentioned documents in the wireless file, one can find that it not only is a propaganda against Palestinians, with a special chapter entitled "Terrorism", but it is also a means to connect with Jews abroad. For example, the MASA project which aims at encouraging young Jews to spend a semester or a year in an Israeli university.

## **2. Press and Publications:**

Press and Publications encompass all types of printing materials/periodicals that are circulated. These periodicals specialize in various subjects (economy, environment, culture, politics, etc...) and help build a solid media and public outreach policy.

## **3. Exhibitions:**

Although this element of PD is costly, organizing exhibits on specific themes about one's country does convey specific messages to the public and the media.

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<sup>85</sup> [www.mfa.gov.il](http://www.mfa.gov.il)

"They are rightfully regarded as excellent media of communication"<sup>86</sup> because they constitute a forum that offers opportunities for exchanges and states' competition.

#### 4. **Cultural and Information Centers:**

"Our education services include information and advice about UK education and exams. Our activities in the arts, education, human rights and governance aim to provide opportunities for cultural dialogue and mutual understanding".<sup>87</sup> This is part of the mission of the British Council in Palestine. This institution is a model for other British Council organizations and US Cultural and Information Centers throughout the world, introduced as important elements of PD programs.

Creating cultural centers is costly and should be carefully considered by the PD Officers in embassies. The latter must "consider the purpose, the pros and cons of a new center before establishing it. Is there a significant audience for the center? Are there alternatives for establishing a library, for instance, a university library...?"<sup>88</sup>

#### 5. **Binational Centers:**

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<sup>86</sup> Hans N. Tuch "Communicating with the world", St. Martin's Press, NY, 1990

<sup>87</sup> [www.britishcouncil.org/ps](http://www.britishcouncil.org/ps)

<sup>88</sup> Hans N. Tuch "Communicating with the world", St. Martin's Press, NY, 1990

Serving long-term PD objectives, these centers are cooperative ventures between two governments, with possibility of private sector involvement. The library, in cultural centers (whether bilateral or not) is a vital instrument used not in a passive manner, where the librarian waits for visitors, but it is rather used to communicate with specific targeted audiences. For instance, materials with a particular subject of interest are compiled and sent out to potential readers. Tuch calls this "the Article Alert List".<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, staff members in these centers interact with local cultural and education institutions, forming an impetus for advancing PD objectives.

#### 6. **Book Translations:**

This instrument is deemed useful in promoting the image of one's country. Although it is also costly, it could serve the PD objectives if there is wide readership and if the books are of particular significance to a foreign audience.<sup>90</sup> Sometimes, in order to provide some form of "attraction" to readers, the author of a book is invited at the host country to make a presentation of his/her book.

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<sup>89</sup> *ibid*

<sup>90</sup> See for example Salma Khadra Jayyusi "Anthology of Modern Palestinian Literature", Columbia Press NY, 1992 – in this publication, the author collects the work materials of several Palestinian poets scattered over many countries and translated them from Arabic into English, thus "bringing the treasures of Palestinian culture to the attention of the world" as put by Jayyusi

### **7. Teaching (your language):**

For many years, the English language programs conducted in many countries by the US government have been the central focus of US PD. Such programs have been regarded as important tools of PD and as a way to convey specific information and ideas about the United States. In fact, such tools have significantly made positive contributions to the US image, garnering wide support (especially amongst the youth) for US cultural and educational values.

### **8. Educational and Cultural Exchange:**

Again, the US has made good use of this important PD resource, especially through the Fulbright programs which offer scholarships to local people to study in the US. Moreover, the Youth Exchange Study Program offered by Amideast "give secondary school students in many Arab and Islamic countries an opportunity to study at American high schools and live with American host families for one academic year".<sup>91</sup> Coordinators of this program assert in their brochures that such programs will not only allow for better understanding of US culture, but they add that it will also benefit (Palestinian) students to "help Americans learn about (your) their country".<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> [http://www.amideast.org/offices/westbank/programs\\_services/yeswb.htm](http://www.amideast.org/offices/westbank/programs_services/yeswb.htm)

<sup>92</sup> *ibid*

## 9. **Personal Contact with journalists:**

Finally, personal contacts with journalists are a particularly effective tool in achieving PD objectives. Foreign journalists stationed or visiting our country are an important source to get the message through and to enhance the image. These journalists highly appreciate the special service in obtaining all necessary information on the spot. PD objectives are best achieved through news and information centers providing and spreading out regular information and press releases, along with the person-to-person contact with journalists. For example, there are many foreign journalists who espouse and campaign for the Palestinian cause, and with whom there should be a consolidation of relationships from the government<sup>93</sup> ; however, PR efforts should also be placed on media experts who take the Israeli stand in their writings and/or reporting.

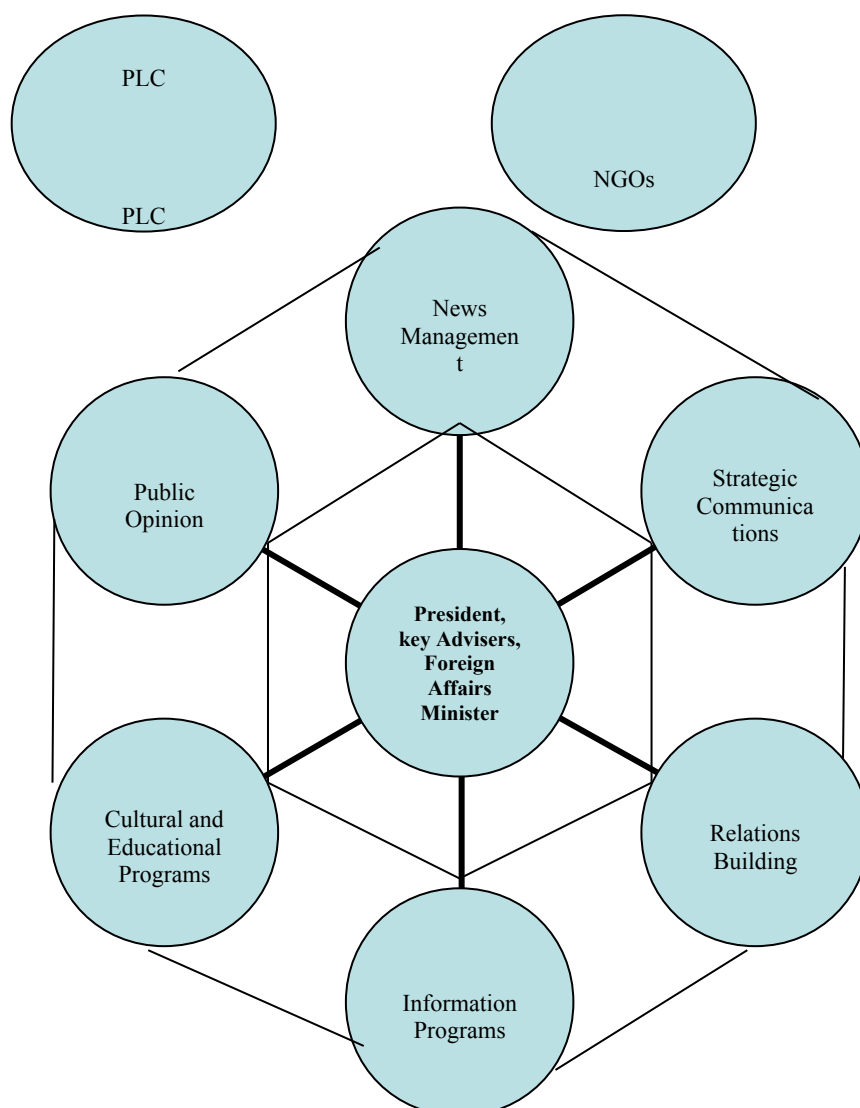
### 1.10. Conclusion

The characteristics of PD can be summed up in the following diagram concentric circles. (see Figure 1.1.) In it, the central player in PD is the President, his key advisers and the Foreign Affairs Minister. In the second circle are the major PD Departments whose heads' responsibility would be to report directly to the central

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<sup>93</sup> Michael Adams is a particularly good example as he sacrificed his career for the Palestinian cause, to know more about this British journalist, see <http://www.guardian.co.uk/obituaries/story/0,3604,1407844,00.html>

player. The outer circle consists of local actors (political parties, NGOs, parliamentary members and the private sector) who are regularly informed of PD activities and directions, for a better local cooperation, therefore leading towards a national concerted effort to make PD a success.





**Figure 1.1. Programs and Actors involved in PD Operations**

## **Chapter 2 Practices of Palestinian Public Diplomacy from Camp David to Al Aqsa Intifada**

### **2.1. Introduction – a situational analysis**

Since its establishment in the late 1800s, Zionism has created myths about the Palestinians. These myths have legitimated not only the creation of Israel but also the formation of an Israeli, and even a Western- Zionist consensus that justifies whatever crime is waged against the Palestinian people by way of killing, destruction, and finally building of the Wall and forcible collective expulsion. Despite the fact that misconceptions about Palestine are glaringly false, it is necessary to address them seriously. This is because they compose the cornerstone of justification for all the crimes that take place today, and the flagrant violation by Israel of the full body of international law, primarily the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, that governs and composes the principles of conduct in times of war towards civilians. Western

misconceptions thus form the blank check for all that the Jewish State practices. So it is necessary and in the common interests of the Palestinian leadership and all other Palestinian actors to convey the clearest of messages to the Israeli and international public at large, by deconstructing the cynicism of these misconceptions. The Israeli propaganda machine has paved the way for striking at the Palestinians after the eruption of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, in the shadow of Palestinian silence at the time regarding a narrative for what took place at Camp David.<sup>94</sup> This will be revealed in more details in 2.3.

In fact, until this day, Palestinians have not yet won the information and media battleground with Israel. The July 2005 Anti-Defamation League (ADL) poll<sup>95</sup> reinforces consistent American negative perceptions of Palestinians. The results of the poll reveal that American neglectful sentiments to the Palestinian cause are largely traced to Palestinian failings in delivering their case in a rightful manner. For example, the poll found that a majority of Americans (52%) believe Israel is currently working harder towards peace than the Palestinians. As hard power (military and economic strengths) is difficult to be utilized due to the deficiency in Palestinian capabilities and the misuse of military attacks against the Israeli occupier, soft power – i.e. the ability to attract and maintain alliances and explain ourselves better is important and achievable. In other words, SP encompasses the way how we express our policies to the public who might not understand and/or agree with them, as well as the vehicles to be used through

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<sup>94</sup> Saleh Abdeljawad, [www.amin.org](http://www.amin.org)

<sup>95</sup> [www.adl.org/PresRele/IsIME\\_62/4752\\_62.htm](http://www.adl.org/PresRele/IsIME_62/4752_62.htm)



which we reach such a public. Palestine should struggle to cope with volatile Western public opinion. Joseph Nye emphasizes the need for soft power not "just as a question of image, public relations, and ephemeral popularity."<sup>96</sup> He adds that if a state ignores the importance of attractiveness to other countries, a high price will be paid.<sup>97</sup> However, the current Soft Power and therefore Palestinian Diplomacy lack strong political leadership, and an organizational structure required to implement a strategic plan over the long term. Soft power requires that governments set the agenda in ways that shape the preferences of others. What are the Palestinian soft power resources? And how to use them in an efficient manner to achieve the Palestinian preferred outcomes? What are failures in the Palestinian Public Diplomacy performance from Camp David to the intifada for independence? How can Palestine remold its diplomatic structure to adapt to the changing information environment?

## **2.2. Palestinian Soft Power Resources**

Soft Power is mainly the creation of activities through multiple actors and organizations with impacts on foreign publics. As pointed out by Nye, in international politics, the resources that produce soft power essentially emanate from the values expressed in the culture, from the internal policies of a state, and from the way foreign relations are handled. He adds that states need not be big to be more influential in world politics.

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<sup>96</sup> Joseph Nye, "Soft Power", *The Means to Success in World Politics*, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. 2004 Public Affairs New York

<sup>97</sup> *ibid*

Small states in Asia or Europe have increased their soft power and gained prominence internationally: the Chinese government has boosted the number of Chinese restaurants around the world as a manner to deepen relations with other countries. In Europe, small countries such as Switzerland are more trusted internationally than big states. Palestine, despite its scarce resources and the military challenges faced with the Israeli occupier, can effectively utilize its soft power resources in order to win the battle for world attention and support and achieve its national objectives.

### **2.2.1. Palestinian Society & Culture**

Soft Power is primarily the creation of activities through multiple actors and organizations with impacts on foreign publics. Artists, art galleries, music, peace activists, journalists, business people, academic and religious leaders, are all individual and societal actors that can influence a broad group of people and broader sets of interests that go beyond those of the government. A good example is the role that Palestinian culture can play as a form of "consolidation and persistence of Palestinian identity... a form of memory against effacement".<sup>98</sup> The government is supposed to harness the potential of the existing positive images and values associated with non state actors. It is therefore essential that there be network relationships between governmental officials and non state actors, which would provide mutual benefits in terms of soft power. Any conduct of PD, i.e. the promotion of soft power of a state, inevitably involves interactions between the government and all local stakeholders.

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<sup>98</sup> Edward Said, "Culture and Resistance", South End Press, Cambridge Massachussets, 2003

Leonard points out to the fact that such interactions would not only benefit the state, but also state actors because positive images and values, if associated with a state, they might have an enabling effect on the activities of non state actors.<sup>99</sup>

The UNDP 2003 Human Development Report placed the Palestinian territories among nations enjoying an average or mid-level of human development, equal to Turkey's and ahead of China, Iran, Algeria, South Africa, Syria, Morocco, India and Egypt. Palestine has been ranked ahead of nations that have enjoyed independence for decades and that possess relatively enormous capacities, compared to Palestine. Despite the degradation of the political environment, the Palestinian society survived against all odds. The destruction of PNA institutions by Israel during the second intifada led to a destabilized political authority and contributed to the deterioration of the Palestinian infrastructure. In spite of the absence of an effective central authority and the Israeli imposed facts on the ground (ranging from checkpoints, settlements, and the Wall), Palestinians have proven their ability to resist such oppressive policies and maintain social unity and cohesion.

"The absence of panic during shelling and bombing; the capacity (developed as the intifada has continued) of mentally circumscribing dangerous areas...; the frank and lively debates in public meetings,... the mass participation of all

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<sup>99</sup> Mark Leonard, "Public Diplomacy", Foreign Policy Center, 2002

social classes in funerals for the victims of extrajudicial assassination- all this showed that the Palestinian mood was far from tending toward capitulation."<sup>100</sup>

As pointed out in the latest Palestine Human Development Report, "the Palestinian human experience is manifested in the capacity to maintain self-control, relationship management skills, family, professional and social cohesion, a set of basic civil services consistently provided by government institutions, local voluntary support of poor families, poverty alleviation programs, and support from relatives and friends abroad."<sup>101</sup>

Exposing Palestinian figures, and/or even laymen who legally fought and are still fighting the Israeli occupation and that have been concerned with the welfare of their people is a pressing challenge to be highlighted to the Western audience. Doing so would hamper Israeli continuous attempts to thwart any assertion of a Palestinian history and identity, or to dehumanize Palestinians, often referred to as "terrorists".

There are many types of Diplomacy that could be used as tools to expose the Palestinian society and/or culture in a positive manner:

- People Diplomacy:

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<sup>100</sup> Camille Mansour, "The Impact of 11 September on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict", Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 31, No. 2, Winter 2002

<sup>101</sup> "Palestine Human Development Report 2004", Birzeit University Development Studies Program

One of the best examples of effective mass organization is the non violent resistance in Bil'in, where villagers holding out marches in their defiance campaign: on Friday 16 September, 2005, "a protest recital" by pianist Jacob Allegro<sup>102</sup> took place. The scene of a Jewish pianist protesting with Palestinian demonstrators against the building of the Wall on Palestinian land is an important event created by the people themselves. Bil'in people should be capturing world headlines with their imaginative, non-violent ways of protest, undeterred by the Israeli army violence.

- NGO Diplomacy:

A very good and effective role played by the Palestine Monitor<sup>103</sup>, the Electronic Intifada<sup>104</sup> or the Palestinian NGO Network<sup>105</sup> is evident, especially in terms of providing useful material to various types of organizations, in monitoring the news, in maintaining and updating a powerful photo gallery on their websites, in developing strong links with various local and international organizations, and in targeting the Western media. The work of such NGOs is to accurately monitor the situation (human rights violations...) and to ensure that factual information is distributed to all groups and organizations both locally and abroad. Such organizations should be (financially) supported by the Palestinian National Authority to expand their work to include materials in Hebrew and other languages. Other types of NGO Diplomacy are Porto

<sup>102</sup> [www.bilin-village.org](http://www.bilin-village.org)

<sup>103</sup> [www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org)

<sup>104</sup> [www.electronicintifada.net](http://www.electronicintifada.net)

<sup>105</sup> Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar, "The Emergence of a Palestinian Globalized Elite, Donors, International Organizations and Local NGOs", Institute of Jerusalem Studies, Muwatin, the Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, Jerusalem, 2005

Allegre<sup>106</sup> and Durban<sup>107</sup> Conferences which played an important role in garnering support for Palestine.

- Arts Diplomacy:

Palestine should benefit from and develop the existing Artistic groups to reflect the daily realities of Palestinian resistance to the occupation. The Popular Art Center, Al Qattan Foundation or Sakakini are good cases in point, as they are organizations that provide an essential tool used to the preservation of the Palestinian folkloric and cultural heritage. As was mentioned before, the underlying assumption is that culture carries a powerful message on its own; especially that it "is a way of fighting against extinction and obliteration".<sup>108</sup> In fact, all forms of activities, including cultural ones, are fundamental in PD because they expose a whole people to the foreign audience and contribute to the wider development of (Palestinian) art movements. Artistic activities do also promote international cultural and artistic exchange, and pave the way for networking with other foreign artists, and therefore easily transmitting our message.

- Diaspora Diplomacy:

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<sup>106</sup> World Social Forum, [www.portoalegre2002.org](http://www.portoalegre2002.org)

<sup>107</sup> This World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Durban, South Africa, August-September 2001, made suggestions to condemn Israel on various grounds, including Racism, [www.unhchr.ch](http://www.unhchr.ch)

<sup>108</sup> Edward Said, "Culture and Resistance", South End Press, Cambridge Massachussets, 2003

This type of Diplomacy involves Palestinians in the Diaspora. The latter have had a good track record in mobilizing some Western groups in favor of the Palestinian case that serves as a catalyst unifying people through a common identity. Diaspora Palestinians Ali Abunimah and Arjan El Fassed have collaborated over the Internet on the Electronic Intifada's development, under the slogan "The Revolution will not be televised" - but it will be web-based".<sup>109</sup> The site has been widely distributed to thousands of email addresses throughout the world, generating over 200 subscribers to the Electronic Intifada's email alert service in just 48 hours. Internet has been an important medium with the least regulation to spread one's ideas. There are many cases of Palestinians in the Diaspora that have helped and supported Palestinian steadfastness and survival through various means. The end of this chapter will examine ways of networking with international communities and strengthening the role that pro-Palestinian institutions in the West can and should play.

- Citizen Diplomacy:

There are a number of individual efforts aimed at spreading the Palestinian narrative in an efficient manner. Edward Said's "Out Of Place" is a personal account of Said and his family's exile, with an emphasis on his birthplace in Jerusalem to schools in Cairo, summers in Beirut and college in the United States. This autobiography-like book is written by a universally recognized and modern thinker, an added value to reaching a wide range of readers. Also, "In Search of Fatima: A Palestinian Story", by

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<sup>109</sup> [www.electronicintifada.net](http://www.electronicintifada.net)

Ghada Karmi is a remarkable memoir of a Palestinian woman telling her personal story of exile and displacement. The story revolves around a human experience under Mandatory Palestine, and then the Nakba. Writing a diary or talking about one's own experience under the Israeli occupation not only "humanizes" the Palestinian case, but also entails that every Palestinian acts as an envoy, a voice, a spokesperson; somebody who would embody and express their people's fullness of experience, history, pain and aspirations in a direct and honest way. In fact, this tool is very effective in reaching out from a Palestinian viewpoint towards a Western audience. "A personal account such as a diary... shows a pure and authentic development of one's voice in which the personal act of speaking about one's moral concerns, with all its doubts, requires the avoidance of writing in reductive and stereotypical frames such as propagandistic discourse."<sup>110</sup> The challenge for this category of diplomacy is for individuals/citizens to make themselves attractive and relevant as sources of Soft Power. This requires state efforts to devise PD training sessions to both state and non state structures.

#### Religious Diplomacy:

Being the cradle of Jesus Christ, Bethlehem is a special place in the Christians' hearts. This is a major resource that Palestine holds; unfortunately this element of "historical

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<sup>110</sup> Toine Van Teeffelen, "(Ex)communicating Palestine: From Best-Selling Terrorist Fiction to Real-Life Personal Accounts,



antecedence... has not played a prominent role in the Palestinian struggle".<sup>111</sup> The importance of such a holy city should not be disregarded and should even be in the news, capturing the attention of Western viewers, most of whom are not aware of the existence of Palestinian Christians! Palestinian Christian officials, including the Mayor of Bethlehem, should play a pivotal role in exposing the burdens and difficulties faced by the city of Bethlehem due to the Israeli expansionist plans. It is also necessary to enhance the city's cultural and religious importance in all occasions, especially during the visits of groups of religious pilgrimages.

### **2.2.2. Palestinian Rights**

Despite high level diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict, countless United Nations Resolutions, calling for the withdrawal of Israeli occupation troops, have not been implemented. Such high level official attempts to find a solution are insufficient if they are not backed by an information/PD strategy, leading to awareness and support by the international community. A major "political soft power" source for Palestinians are these UN affirmed Palestinian rights under International Law in relation to the key issues of the Palestinian case: the parity of the two peoples and their right to establish respective states on the territory of the former Mandate of Palestine (UN General Assembly Resolution 181, 29 November 1947); the Palestinian refugees' right of return and compensation (UN General Assembly Resolution 194, 11 December 1948); Israeli

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<sup>111</sup> Jean Allain, "Beyond the Armed Struggle, The Relationship of International Law and International Organizations to the Palestinian Cause", Ibrahim Ab-Lughod Institute of International Studies, Birzeit University, 2005

withdrawal from territory occupied by force as a result of the 1967 war as mandated by UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 (1967, 1973); the applicability of the Palestinian right of self-determination as decisive of any solution (UN General Assembly Resolution 34/70, 6 December 1973); and the unconditional applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention, as well as the reaffirmation of international and UN law that it is inadmissible to acquire territory by force or conquest (UN Security Council Resolutions 476 of 30 June 1980, 480 of 12 November 1980, and 1322 of 7 October 1980).<sup>112</sup> International Law is undoubtedly supportive of the Palestinian national aspirations and would lead to an alternate and just peace, replacing the previous so-called "peace" agreements that only took into consideration what is acceptable to the stronger party (Israel) and treated the facts on the ground as "fait accompli" and as the basic principles for negotiations.<sup>113</sup>

The right of return is protected by several international and human rights laws and resolutions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil Rights (ICCPR), and United Nations Resolution 194. The UDHR affirms that "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country" (Article 13). The ICCPR, passed by the U.N. General Assembly in 1966, states that "No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country" (Resolution 2200). U.N. Resolution 194 resolves that "the refugees

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<sup>112</sup> George Toameh, "United Nations Resolutions on Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: 1947-1974", Boynton/Cook Publishers; Revised edition (May 1987), see also Rex Brynen's articles on FOFOGNET <http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/fofognet.html>

<sup>113</sup> Azmi Bishara, "The Right of Resistance and the Palestinian Ordeal", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Issue No. 122, Winter 2002

wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest possible date, and compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property". Finally, the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2004 advisory opinion of the World Court, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) declares Israel's Annexation Wall illegal. The ICJ ruling states that the "construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated régime, are contrary to international law ... [and] Israel is under an obligation to terminate its breaches of international law; it is under an obligation to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall."<sup>114</sup> After the ICJ advisory opinion was issued, the UN General Assembly approved Res. ES-10/15, demanding that Israel comply with the ICJ ruling on the Wall; the EU also voted in favor of this demand. This ruling proves to be a very important decision in the history of the Palestinian struggle endured since the 1948 Nakba: it not only refers to the illegality of the "Wall" (officially adopting the term "Wall" as opposed to the Israeli preferred term of "barrier"), it further addressed Israeli actions in the Occupied Territory as a whole, reiterating the illegality of settlement activity in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Palestinian PD in the post-ICJ ruling will be examined in Chapter 3. In a nutshell, International Law should be emphasized, especially in the post-September 11 arena, in order to maximize a positive outcome to the Palestinian case.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> [www.icj.org](http://www.icj.org)

<sup>115</sup> Jean Allain, "Beyond the Armed Struggle, The Relationship of International Law and International Organizations to the Palestinian Cause", Ibrahim Ab-Lughod Institute of International Studies, Birzeit University, 2005

### 2.2.3. Democracy

Palestine's Democracy track record has been in the spotlight throughout the last few years. Assuming that the two major pillars of democracy are elections and a multi-party system, Palestine has witnessed a significant progress in that regard despite the external obstacles, particularly the occupation, which clearly undermine the democratic process. Although some scholars argue that Palestinian democracy is evident in theory but it is not

fully manifested in practice<sup>116</sup>, the Israeli occupation remains the most prominent obstacle to the development of democracy in Palestine. In fact, democracy regresses in the absence of economic and social and human rights, all of which are a result of Israel's continuing occupation and domination of Palestinian life, economy and territory.

Palestine has been widely admired for its progress in moving towards the direction of becoming a substantive democracy. In fact, the will of the people reflects a genuine desire for democracy; this was translated in the January 2004 presidential elections. In this regard, Palestine has enhanced its attractiveness through the electoral process. The 2004 elections were a major step forward, especially that they witnessed widespread participation (71%<sup>117</sup> of registered voters casting ballots), and were declared free and fair by local and international monitors. It is important to highlight such a Palestinian

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<sup>116</sup> Nathan Brown, "Evaluating Palestinian Reform", Carnegie Papers Middle East Series. Democracy & Rule of Law Project No. 59 (June 2005)

<sup>117</sup> Central Elections Commission

achievement which symbolizes the Palestinian struggle for freedom not only from the Israeli occupation but also for freedom at the internal political dimension. This was eloquently expressed by journalist Bakr Abu Bakr in the Palestinian daily "Al Hayat Al-Jadidah":

"It is important... to point out what these elections represent[ed] to a Palestinian people still struggling to be free, still fighting Israeli occupation, and exercising democracy... They represent[ed]: first, an assertion of a course and a way of life chosen by the Palestinian people exemplified by freedom, dignity, dialogue, responsibility, and respect for the will of the people; second, the will and aspiration of many popular leaderships to serve the people...; third, a demonstration of Palestinian solidarity...; fourth, the continuity of Palestinian political struggle towards common goals; fifth, a renewal of societal leaderships."<sup>118</sup>

Then came the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections (25 January 2006) in which Palestinians have demonstrated an interest and commitment in democracy. The fair conduct of these elections has reflected the "commitment of Palestinians to the democratic elections and citizen participation in public affairs."<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Bakr Abu Bakr Commentary, "Al Hayat Al-Jadidah", 13 May 2005

<sup>119</sup> "Preliminary Statement of the NDI/Carter Center International Observer Delegation To The PLC Elections", Jerusalem, 26 January 2006

Clearly then, the elections represented not only a simple democratic procedure; but they were also a concrete reflection of democratic ideals and principles, strongly advocated by the Palestinian society – all these principles and values of freedom, political pluralism, which are also a form of Palestinian unity, should be overemphasized when talking about the Palestine case. On the other hand, the existence of political parties pave the way for free and fair elections. Although the Palestinian political structure is today characterized by Bipolarity (with the dominant Hamas and Fateh parties), there are small parties struggling to remain actively present in the Palestinian scene. This situation lays the foundation for a multi-party structure in Palestine.

#### **2.2.4. A vibrant civil society (the role of Non Governmental Organizations)**

With the boosting in the number of NGOs around the world from 6000 to 26000 in the 1990ies alone, governments must now share the international stage with non state actors who can use their soft power and mobilize the public.<sup>120</sup> NGOs are effective in “penetrating states without regard to border. Because they often involve citizens who are well placed in the domestic politics of several countries, such networks are able to focus the attention of the media and governments on their issues.”<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Joseph Nye, “Soft Power”, The Means to Success in World Politics, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. 2004 Public Affairs New York

<sup>121</sup> *ibid*

It is not a coincidence that Palestinian NGOs are among the visible and most vibrant in the Arab world.<sup>122</sup> Since the outset of the First Intifada, NGOs have had the status of ministries and were closely attached to the Palestinian grass-root community.

The NGO sector in Palestine went through three main stages:

**Pre-Oslo:** NGOs acted as a shadow government in the absence of a Palestinian authority and governmental institutions. In fact, most services within health, agriculture, education and human rights were taken care of by a strong and well funded NGO sector. Some scholars argue that the the Palestinian Authority has been formed in the midst of a highly competent NGO sector that historically took on the role a service provider in the absence of a central authority.<sup>123</sup> Some of the NGOs had the status of ministries and were closely connected to the local Palestinian community; this was the case for example with the "popular committees" whose purpose was not only "...to carry forward the Intifada but also to assume responsibility for a wide range of social

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<sup>122</sup> Reema Hamami, "Palestinian NGOs Since Oslo: From NGO Politics to Social Movements?", Middle East Report, no 214"

<sup>123</sup> Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar, "The Emergence of a Palestinian Globalized Elite, Donors, International Organizations and Local NGOs", Institute of Jerusalem Studies, Muwatin, the Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, Jerusalem, 2005

services... such as the provision of health and hygiene-related services and the establishment of educational programs after schools were closed by Israeli authorities."<sup>124</sup>

- **during Oslo:** a number of scholars held that fierce competition erupted between the PNA and the NGOs with the arrival of the PNA. The latest had an interest in curbing the decades of influence of NGOs, especially that many were critical of the Oslo agreements.

"They [Palestinian NGOs] saw the PNA as an emerging state that could threaten their autonomy, and that of civil society. This was the outlook that urged a group of NGOs to form their own network."<sup>125</sup>

A tense relationship hence developed between the two parties; however, some cooperation has been achieved, especially in the sectoral policy formulations. At this period, most but not all NGOs had different functions in three varied areas:

- because of overlap and competition with the newly established Palestinian Authority, they played a political role and acted as a quasi-opposition to the PNA; some

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<sup>124</sup> "Encyclopedia of the Palestinians", Edited by Philip Mattar, Facts On File, Inc., NY, 2000

<sup>125</sup> Jamil Hilal, NGOs and State in Palestine: Negotiating Boundaries



NGOs monitored the human rights violations of the newly established PNA;<sup>126</sup>

- they focused on lobbying and advocacy with the aim to influence national policies and formulate strategies leading to genuine development;<sup>127</sup>

- they transformed their agenda from national liberation or steadfastness (sumud) to empowerment and development.

- **during Al Aqsa Intifada:** with the Camp David negotiations' failure leading to the eruption of the intifada, NGOs took this opportunity to show that the PNA is unable to live up to people's expectations, but they have transitioned their role to monitoring the situation on the ground, providing regular reports that reveal Israeli violations and continuous aggressive attacks against the Palestinians. The GIPP (Grassroot International Protection of the Palestinian People) have organized a number of solidarity activities with the Palestinian people (visit: <http://www.pngo.net/GIPP/index.htm>); the Palestine Monitor ([www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org)) has been an excellent source of information for media

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<sup>126</sup> Rema Hammami, Jamil Hilal, & Salim Tamari, " Civil Society and Governance in Palestine", Palestine Paper, Capetown Meeting, January 1999

<sup>127</sup> ibid

outlets, international correspondents based locally as well as international political policy makers. The Palestine Monitor is an advocacy project started at the outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada, meant to specifically address the foreign audience in the best manner possible. The major objective of NGOs is to renew links with the Palestinians locally and abroad, as well as cooperate with international solidarity movements. However, this is not enough, claim Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar:

"While Palestinian NGOs have undertaken very successful forms of professional action, such as providing medical services and issuing reliable reports on Palestinian casualties and damage caused by Israeli military operations, and other human rights violations, they have not developed a synergy with the political forces (whether the political parties, Islamic and National Committee for the Intifada or unions) or with the population."<sup>128</sup>

In other words, although Palestinian NGOs have gained international recognition and credibility especially in the field of advocacy, they have not been able to harmonize the population's energies and marshal them to realize Palestinian political aspirations.

The main catalyst for a new NGO role came after the Israeli decision to build a Wall inside the Palestinian territory in 2002. The Wall was erected inside the Palestinian

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<sup>128</sup> Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar, "The Emergence of a Palestinian Globalized Elite, Donors, International Organizations and Local NGOs", Institute of Jerusalem Studies, Muwatin, the Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, Jerusalem, 2005

occupied territory, confiscating hundreds of thousands of dunams<sup>129</sup> of Palestinian land, including fertile land. The process started in the North of the West Bank, in Qalqilya, which is now an open air prison, as the Gaza Strip which has been for more than a decade surrounded by the wall on three sides.<sup>130</sup> Despite intensive international criticism and the International Court of Justice advisory opinion on the matter in July 2004, the Sharon government continued the construction of the Wall with the pretext of "terror campaigns" launched by Palestinian resistance groups. These developments led to the awakening of NGOs who became more important actors than the years of PNA-Israel negotiations (1991-2000). NGOs shifted their work from developmental projects to immediate needs, especially humanitarian (how to manage the new crisis) and international advocacy campaigns. The latter involved a more direct political confrontation with the Israeli occupation army through the international presence. Such campaigns have been so far successful in mobilizing local and international resources.<sup>131</sup>

The perspective of the overall situation of Palestine today is mainly related to the labeling of Palestinians as "terrorist". By "terrorism", it is understood in the West and Israel "as an instance of political violence directed at civilians with a calculated intention of producing fear as well as physical harm."<sup>132</sup> The problem here is that terrorism has only been associated with non state actors, ignoring the fact that states can also engage in terrorism.

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<sup>129</sup> "Israel's Wall", Special Edition, First Anniversary of the ICJ's ruling on Israel's Wall, Negotiations Affairs Department, PLO, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005

<sup>130</sup> [www.pengon.org](http://www.pengon.org)

<sup>131</sup> see for example: [www.palsolidarity.org](http://www.palsolidarity.org) ; [www.ifamericansknew.org](http://www.ifamericansknew.org)

<sup>132</sup> Richard Falk, "Azmi Bishara, the Right of Resistance, and the Palestinian Ordeal", Journal of Palestine Studies, Winter 2002, Volume XXXI, No. 2, Issue 122

## **2.3. Camp David II**

### **2.3.1. What happened at Camp David II:**

In July 2000, US President Clinton invited Prime Minister Barak and President Arafat to Camp David to conclude negotiations on the long-overdue final status agreement. Barak proclaimed his "red lines": Israel would not return to its pre-1967 borders; East Jerusalem with its 175,000 Jewish settlers would remain under Israeli sovereignty; Israel would annex settlement blocs in the West Bank containing some 80 percent of the 180,000 Jewish settlers; and Israel would accept no legal or moral responsibility for the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem. The Palestinians, in accord with UN Security Council resolution 242 and their understanding of the spirit of the Oslo Declaration of Principles, sought Israeli withdrawal from the vast majority of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including East Jerusalem, and recognition of an independent

state in those territories.<sup>133</sup> But Barak was very clear from the beginning: there is no return to the 1967 borders.<sup>134</sup>

The US-sponsored summit convened. It suggested the division of Palestinian territory into four separate cantons entirely surrounded and controlled by Israel. Israel sought to annex 10% of the Occupied Palestinian Territory in exchange for only 1% of Israel's own territory. The proposal denied Palestinians control over their own borders, airspace and water resources while legitimizing and expanding illegal Israeli colonies in Palestinian territory. Israel also proposed that Palestinians be required to give up any claim to the occupied portion of Jerusalem, forcing the recognition of Israel's annexation of Arab-inhabited east Jerusalem<sup>135</sup>. However, further talks suggested that Israel allow Palestinians sovereignty over isolated Palestinian neighborhoods but still remain surrounded by illegal Israeli colonies. The Camp David Summit ended without reaching an agreement, mainly because of the Jerusalem issue. Although Barak offered a far more extensive Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank than any other Israeli leader had publicly considered, he insisted on maintaining Israeli sovereignty over East Jerusalem. This was unacceptable to the Palestinians and to most of the Muslim world. Arafat left Camp David with enhanced stature among his constituents because he did not yield to American and Israeli pressure. Barak returned home to face political crisis within his own government, including the abandonment of coalition partners who felt he had offered the Palestinians too much. A virulent Israeli campaign delegitimizing

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<sup>133</sup> <http://www.gush-shalom.org/generous/generous.html>

<sup>134</sup> Nasser Aruri, "Dishonest Broker: The U.S. Role in Israel and Palestine", Cambridge South End Press, 2003

<sup>135</sup> Clayton E. Swisher, "The Truth about Camp David" the Untold Story about the Collapse of the Middle East Peace Process, Nation Books New York, 2004

Arafat has started. On the other hand, although all parties had agreed that in the concluding communiqué about the summit conference, no blame will be put on any party, in case no agreement is reached, US President Bill Clinton has put his finger-pointing on the Palestinians for the failure of the summit by explicitly accusing them of not moving forward.<sup>136</sup>

### **2.3.2. Israeli Myth of a "missed generous offer" Vs. Palestinian reactions to the myth**

The fact that there were no official documents at Camp David II paved the way for positions to be conveyed either orally or in written articles, as the personal accounts delivered by Malley and Agha.<sup>137</sup>

The Israeli position, or rather propaganda machine, was at its best in promptly conveying a message of blame and attack against the Palestinian leader. Upon the conclusion of the summit (on 25 July 2000), Barak made the following statement at a Press Conference:

"All my life I fought for Israeli security, and I reiterate: I will not agree to relinquish the vital interests of Israeli security; I will not agree to give up the strengthening of Israel and the bolstering of greater Jerusalem, with a solid Jewish majority, for future generations...Arafat was afraid to make the historic decisions necessary at

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<sup>136</sup> Helga Baumgarten, "The Myth of Camp David Or The Distortion of the Palestinian Narrative", Abu Lughod Institute, Birzeit University, 2004

<sup>137</sup> *ibid*

this time in order to bring about an end to the conflict. Arafat's positions on Jerusalem are those which prevented the achievement of the agreement.....Arafat somehow hesitated to take the historic decisions that were needed in order to put an end of it...It's painful to realize that the other side is not ripe for peace..."<sup>138</sup>

It is interesting to note that Israel's myth started to crystallize well before the summit ended. Barak reiterated the slogan "We turned every stone, we exhausted every possibility to bring an end to the conflict..."<sup>139</sup> During the summit, Barak brought with him "encrypted communications equipment that, when it worked, allowed him to talk securely with his PR team in Israel, including Moshe Gaon and Tal Zilberstein..."<sup>140</sup> From its side, the Palestinian delegation, with far less media sophistication and resources, did not make one single relevant declaration. The only unsubstantial statement made by Arafat, upon his return to Gaza, was very symbolic, referring to the day of independence with Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine and the usual challenging note of "...who does not like it might just as well drink the waters of the Dead Sea."<sup>141</sup> The biggest mistake by Palestinians was their use of the traditional diplomacy (secret diplomacy: Arafat's visits to world leaders to explain the Palestinian position), while completely ignoring PD and the use of international media outlets. The Israeli myths and the blame game, with new ideas (such as "there is no

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<sup>138</sup> <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/>

<sup>139</sup> Helga Baumgarten, "The Myth of Camp David Or The Distortion of the Palestinian Narrative", Abu Lughod Institute, Birzeit University, 2004

<sup>140</sup> Clayton E. Swisher, "The Truth about Camp David" the Untold Story about the Collapse of the Middle East Peace Process, Nation Books New York, 2004

<sup>141</sup> Helga Baumgarten, "The Myth of Camp David Or The Distortion of the Palestinian Narrative", Abu Lughod Institute, Birzeit University, 2004

Palestinian partner" ...), not only continued but also started to be echoed by Western media outlets.

## **2.4. Al Aqsa Intifada**

As a reaction to the continuing and deepening occupation of the Palestinian land, another Intifada erupted. In September 28, 2000, the second Intifada, known as the Al-Aqsa Intifada, begins after Sharon's incursion into the Al-Aqsa mosque. Sharon states that Israel controls the area and will never give it to the Palestinians because it is built over a Jewish holy site. Within the days that followed, Israeli Occupation Forces stormed the Al-Aqsa compound and opened fire on worshippers, killing seven Palestinians and wounding 220<sup>142</sup>. As the news spread, mass demonstrations in all parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip erupted. It should have been clearly articulated by the Palestinian officials that the Intifada was a response to injustice. For seven years, the Palestinians waited for Oslo to produce results; however, while Israel was building settlements, which doubled during this period of a supposed "peace", Palestinians almost did not perform any act of violence against Israeli military depredations. The uprising came as a direct outcome of the Israeli policy. The deeply flawed "peace process" initiated at Oslo, combined with the daily frustrations and humiliations

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<sup>142</sup> [www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org)



inflicted upon Palestinians in the occupied territory, converged to ignite the furor of the population.

The military path of Palestinian resistance turned out to be the worst options. " "Suicide bombings are totally immoral and serve no strategic goal, but have been totally successful in feeding into the political plans of maniac military professionals like Ariel Sharon and Shimon Peres".<sup>143</sup> In fact, such attacks have only increased the Israeli propaganda and portrayal of Palestinian innocents as being the terrorist and rapist and the Israeli rapist as an innocent in dire need of security. Also, Militarizing the intifada has harmed the PD/image of the Palestinians for the following reasons:

1. Using weapons has allowed Israel to use excessive force, therefore killing and injuring a large number of Palestinian innocent civilians, without serious media coverage or international condemnatory reactions;
2. Because of the woeful lack of honest coverage, the daily confrontations were exposed on international media outlets as fights between two "equal" armies – it should be made clear to any type of audience that the Palestinian case is not a negotiation dispute, nor is it a case of a dispute between two parties that can be described as equal parties; this is a struggle for self-determination;

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<sup>143</sup> Sam Bahour & Michael Dahan, "A Way out", April 2002, [www.amin.org](http://www.amin.org)

3. To save its image, the Israeli powerful and effective media machine introduced new terminology to the situation, ranging from "terrorists" to "disputed territory" or even "infrastructure of terror", while Palestinians have no coined terminology ;

4. While the world was busy with the daily headlines about Palestinian "terrorists" attacking Israeli "citizens", and with a very poor Palestinian media pro-active machine and confusing spokespersons, with divergent and sometimes contradictory statements, Israel succeeded in forcing change on the ground (settlements, wall, prisoners, assassinations...);

5. Then, unexpected events negatively impacted the Intifada: those of 11 September 2001. This terrorist act, when hijacked planes slammed into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, was a present for Sharon, who used it to cover the war crimes Israel was committing in its occupation of the Palestinian territory, disguising these under the banner of the "war against terrorism". Such events required that Palestinians evaluate

their past struggle and come up with realistic means to secure their future state.<sup>144</sup>

On a different angle, some bilateral 'diplomatic' initiatives have also tarnished the Palestinian PD and cause: the Geneva Agreement, between some 'peace camps' from both sides (Palestinian and Israeli), was signed during a peak period of bloodshed, in stark contrast to the developments on the ground in Palestine.<sup>145</sup> Such an event was publicized all over the globe and was exposed as a model for peace in the region. However, this has created a disconnection and a distortion from the ongoing reality in Palestine, concealing Israel's occupation and daily use of state terror against the Palestinian population.

## **2.5. How can the Palestinian PD be improved?**

It is now clear that many mistakes could have been avoided if there was a Palestinian operational PD machine. How can we generate unprecedented support for the Palestinian cause? As we have noted, Palestinian PD can be said to be lacking essential means to succeed. As it has also been agreed upon, a state must work through

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<sup>144</sup> Jean Allain, "Beyond the Armed Struggle, The Relationship of International Law and International Organizations to the Palestinian Cause", Ibrahim Ab-Lughod Institute of International Studies, Birzeit University, 2005

<sup>145</sup> Samir Awad, Review of "New Game or New Narratives?", "The Path to Geneva: the Quest for a Permanent Agreement" by Yossi Beilin, and "The Geneva Accord: Plan or Pretense?" by Nick Kardahji, Journal of Palestine Studies, University of California Press, Volume XXXIV, No. 3, Spring 2005

organizations and networks with and separate from government in order to make its voice heard and to influence events outside its direct control.

As cunningly put by Ambassador Afif Safieh,

"... we, Palestinians, have never put our house in order and we have a sort of dynamic approach to the American society. I believe that we should address not only American decision-making but also American public opinion, and we should have an institution, not necessarily within the Authority, with a pool of 15 or so speakers who spend their time moving between every single state in the US. We should have here in Palestine think tanks that decide upon the best Palestinian diplomatic doctrine and how we should package our message, because here again we were not always maestros in the communication of our ideas and aspirations... There is no doubt whatsoever; for as long as we do not do our homework, we are destined to remain failures." <sup>146</sup>

The Palestinian homework mainly implies, *inter alia*, initiating change through the development of a creative foreign policy. For example, from the beginning, i.e. before reaching independence, the Palestinian Authority should build in its structure demilitarization:

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<sup>146</sup> [www.passia.org](http://www.passia.org)

"... like Costa Rica, it can adopt a constitution which will prohibit the establishment of an army. A step of this sort would in the most fundamental way define Palestine as a peace-loving state." <sup>147</sup>

In order to achieve its objective of increasing its popularity abroad (for its national interest), the Palestinian leadership should work on two fronts: on a theoretical level and a practical one.

### **2.5.1. Theoretical Level**

Palestinian PD requires a new thinking (political will) and decision making structures – none of these still exist. By new thinking is meant that the image problem and the foreign policy are not apart but do form an integrated whole. PD is a strategic instrument and a central element of the Foreign Policy of Palestine; and it is in the national interest of Palestinians to formulate and manage their foreign policy in a rightful manner. This entails a deeper understanding of foreign attitudes and a more effective communications apparatus of Palestinian policies, as well as a serious governmental engagement to foster increasingly meaningful relations with foreign journalists. Another theoretical factor which should be given priority is a strong

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<sup>147</sup> Jerome M. Segal, "A Foreign Policy for the State of Palestine", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Winter 1989

decision-making structure; i.e. developing immediately a coherent strategic coordinating framework, including a Presidential directive on PD. Finally, as a vital instrument of national policy, a successful Palestinian PD should include a central role for non state actors<sup>148</sup> through a strong coordination mechanism among the Palestinian National Authority, Civil Society, Private Sector and Diaspora. Only through the building of an internal consensus can a Palestinian strategy be fruitful.<sup>149</sup>

### **2.5.2. Practical Level**

Based on what has been said, how can PD machinery function properly? The current governmental apparatus, as it is constituted, is not able to undertake the implementation of an effective strategy. It is not organizationally set up for such a task and, if it is to do so, will need an extensive overhaul.

A suggested organizational structure requires the creation of new departments within the PNA structure. Logically, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would implement the PD program, led by the central player, i.e. the President, his key advisers and the Foreign Affairs Minister (See Figure 1.1.).

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<sup>148</sup> William A. Rugh, "Engaging the Arab & Islamic Worlds through Public Diplomacy", Public Diplomacy Council, 2004

<sup>149</sup> Jean Allain, "Beyond the Armed Struggle, The Relationship of International Law and International Organizations to the Palestinian Cause", Ibrahim Ab-Lughod Institute of International Studies, Birzeit University, 2005

The following is a suggested draft organizational structure:

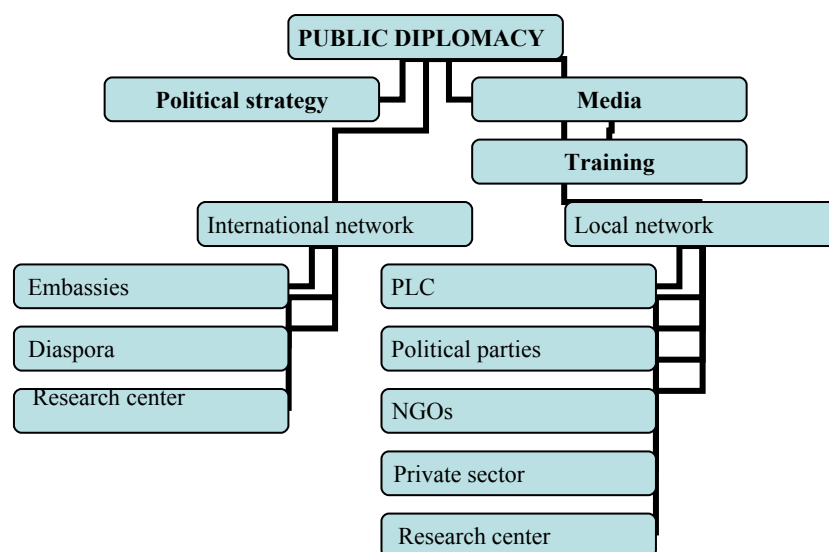


Figure 2.1. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Public Diplomacy Department*

The PD Director would have two essential tasks: to follow up on the internal Media, Training and Political strategy programs and to report to the PD state central player (the President, his key advisers, and the Foreign Affairs Minister). By "Political Strategy" and "Media" is meant the formation of think tanks in these fields. These think tanks have the role to design, recommend and improve the policy and decision making through scientific researches and analysis.<sup>150</sup> Through local and international networks, this Department can operate efficiently and without high financial costs, if the Diaspora Palestinians and friends are harnessed to the Palestinian interest.<sup>151</sup>

Also, with the tremendous advances in communications technology in recent years, the above organization is easy and not costly in terms of implementation. PD activities should be essentially carried out through websites, CD-Roms, emails, teleconference programs, and other marvels of the late XXI Century revolution.

### **2.5.3. The role of the media**

<sup>150</sup> see for example the work of RAND on [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org)

<sup>151</sup> Jean Allain, "Beyond the Armed Struggle, The Relationship of International Law and International Organizations to the Palestinian Cause", Ibrahim Ab-Lughod Institute of International Studies, Birzeit University, 2005



Interrelated revolutionary changes in politics, international relations, and mass communication have greatly expanded the media's role in diplomacy. The revolution in communication technologies, the capability to broadcast, often live, almost every significant development in world events to almost every place on the globe, has led to the globalization of electronic journalism and to substantial growth of networks, stations, and communication consumers worldwide.<sup>152</sup> Consequently, a nation's or a leader's image is easily and promptly conveyed worldwide. While communications technology is becoming more widespread, the lack of research on media and diplomacy and the lack of analytical tools and models have inhibited progress in the field; in fact, Palestinians have not yet embarked on an aggressive and well-financed Media Strategy to challenge the fierce battle led by the Israeli media. What were the faults in the Palestinian media performance throughout the latest years, and how to redeem them? In September 2005, a conference by the Palestinian Ministry of Information was convened on "an Information Strategy for promoting the Palestinian cause in the West".

Conferees made strong self-criticism about the fact that the media attempts to present the Palestinian struggle as that of a Palestinian mother appearing to celebrate the death of her son and refusing to show her real feelings or a militant exhibiting a child carrying a weapon or a masked 16 years old parading with a Kalashnikov. The need to humanize the Palestinian image through encouraging human interest stories and documentaries was emphasized repeatedly.

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<sup>152</sup> Hamid Mowlana, "Global Information and World Communication : New Frontiers in International Relations", SAGE Publications, 1997

The following is a summary distributed at the end of the Conference on the failings of Palestinians in delivering their case professionally and convincingly. The results concentrated particularly on the failure of the Palestinian "messenger":

1.     **Speaking with one voice.** The message coming from Palestinians is not unified. Depending on whom one speaks to, it often happens that the view differs. There must be a prior agreement about what is the official line on any matter.
  
2.     **Language and terminology.** Too many Palestinians do not speak foreign languages with sufficient proficiency. This is of great importance, since Israelis are skilled at presenting their case fluently and articulately in Western languages. The result is that they seem to win the argument each time. There is also an issue of terminology. Israeli use of certain terms has distorted the picture and influenced the West's terminology. Examples are: 'ceasefire' - more suitable to two equal armies than the reality of occupied and occupier; 'disputed territory', meaning occupied land; 'terrorism', meaning legitimate resistance, 'security fence', meaning Apartheid wall, 'infrastructure of terror' meaning clinics, charity organizations, and kindergartens, and so on.
  
3.     **Cultural affinity.** It is important to address the West, decision makers, the public and the media, in a cultural language they can understand.

Palestinians often do not know this culture and speak in a way, which is unappealing, and therefore can easily be dismissed or misunderstood. For example, understating the case is more usual in the West than overstating it or using strong language.

4.     **Physical appearance.** People are influenced by physical appearance. A man or woman who is badly dressed or badly groomed does not impress as much as someone who looks nice. Gender is also important to a Western audience. More women should be spokespeople, as this conveys an impression of sexual equality and respect for women which are important in the West.

5.     **Presentation skills.** It is not everyone who can speak on TV or radio without any training. This applies equally to ministers, high officials and others. Again, looking at the Israeli parallel, it is striking that when Israelis speak they have a technique and a way of answering questions, which makes the point and uses the time of the interview efficiently. Palestinian officials should avoid undertaking interviews if they have had no training.

6.     **Understanding Israel.** This concern the "research center" in the organizational structure suggested for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Understanding how Israelis address the West and how they operate there is essential. The debate in the West is between the Israeli and Palestinian

versions of events. It is often the case that Palestinians appear not to understand their Israeli protagonists and so lose the argument, even though they are in the right track.

7. **Being proactive.** Israel has a long history of abuse against the Palestinians. The latter should be prepared for the next assault, without waiting for it to happen. This means that for too long, the Palestinian pattern has been to react to the event, rather than anticipate it and put their case first. Probably the best example of this failure is the Camp David talks in 2000, when the Israeli side was allowed to put across its version without official contradiction. The result has been that there is a solid conviction in the West about Ehud Barak's 'generous offer' which the Palestinians rejected. When the Palestinian accounts of what happened were published, it was too late.

8. **Using facts rather than opinion.** Scrupulous attention to the facts when presenting the case is crucial, because the Israeli technique is always to distort and misinform. Palestinians often do not present the facts, but just refute the Israeli arguments with opinion. This calls for attention to detail and substance on the part of Palestinian spokespeople.

9. **Avoiding the myth of equivalence.** Palestinians promote the idea that they are a state or an entity which is somehow equivalent to Israel. This is not deliberate, but it becomes inevitable when using terms of state

structure and military forces. It has allowed the West to excuse Israel's many excesses on account of this misconception. It is important for Palestinians to project the idea of a people under occupation without capacity to resist an army and a state policy directed against them.

While focus was mainly put on enhancing the skills of messengers, it is also important to re-activate and organize the roles of various NGOs (dealing in advocacy and media) and PNA bodies (such as the Negotiations Support Unit, Monitoring Group, etc...) and decide on issuing daily information letter about the Israeli violations in the Palestinian Territory. The information would comprise data about all forms of violations, ranging from settlements activities, to assassinations, killing of civilians, collective punishment, home demolitions, ethnic cleansing, *inter alia*. A daily paper of talking points could go far in reflecting the Palestinian public position. This paper would be electronically sent to all types of audiences locally and internationally. In order to achieve this, again, it is fundamental to create and consolidate a strong coordination among the PNA, the Private Sector and the NGO sector.

It is true that Palestine is a just cause; however, the performance of some of its defenders was not up to the task. But an attempt to change that could lead to significantly fruitful results is still possible. The great unprecedented success achieved at The Hague is clear evidence. The key will be in the implementation, follow up and the seriousness of the Palestinian leadership in pursuing such endeavor.

### **Chapter 3 - Palestinian Public Diplomacy in the post-ICJ Advisory Opinion on the illegality of the Wall**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2004, the World Court declares Israel's Annexation Wall illegal. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling states that the "construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated régime, are contrary to international law ... [and] Israel is under an obligation to terminate its

breaches of international law; it is under an obligation to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall.”

If PD is "informing, engaging, and influencing foreign publics in support of a country's national interests"<sup>153</sup>, then Palestinians have achieved unprecedented and definitive PD victory through the ICJ ruling on the Wall. Such success is certainly no panacea if not followed by Palestinian national operational measures through efficient PD tools to ensure putative advantage to the Palestinian cause. Before addressing the PD instruments to be used to advance the Palestinian case after the ICJ ruling, the chapter opens with an explanation of the ICJ Advisory Opinion. The next sections will tackle the success and failings in the Palestinian PD regarding the development of the ruling. Finally, some recommendations will be suggested, based on other countries' proven best practices fostering strong dynamic underpinnings for international support for Palestine.

### **3.2. What is the ICJ Advisory Opinion on the Wall?**

#### **3.2.1. General Information on the ICJ and the Advisory Opinion**

With the dissolution of the League of Nations, the ICJ was created at the San Francisco Conference in spring 1945, with the participation of 50 States. The ICJ was established with a view to helping the UN in "bringing about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law,

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<sup>153</sup> William A. Rugh, "Engaging the Arab & Islamic Worlds through Public Diplomacy", Public Diplomacy Council, 2004

adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations."<sup>154</sup> The ICJ is the principal judicial organ of the UN Charter. Its seat is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). It started to be operational in 1946, when it replaced the Permanent Court of International Justice which had functioned in the Peace Palace since 1922.

The ICJ has two functions: to settle in accordance with international law the legal disputes submitted to it by States, and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by duly authorized international organs and agencies.<sup>155</sup>

As stipulated in Article 96.1 of the Court's Statute, "the General Assembly or the Security Council may request the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion on any legal question."<sup>156</sup> On the same angle, Article 96.2 of the UN Charter states that the General Assembly could authorize "other organs of the United Nations and the specialized agencies" to require advisory opinions on "legal questions arising within the scope of their activities."<sup>157</sup> Article 65 also indicates

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<sup>154</sup> UN Charter X.1.

<sup>155</sup> "Advisory Opinion Proceedings on Legal Consequences of Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", ICJ, Written Statement (30 January 2004) And Oral Pleading (23 February 2004) , see also <http://www.icj-cij.org/>

<sup>156</sup> *ibid*

the organizations in question are: International Labour Organisation (ILO) ; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); World Health Organization (WHO); International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD); International Finance Corporation (IFC); International Development Association (IDA); International Monetary Fund (IMF); International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); International Telecommunication Union (ITU); World Meteorological Organization (WMO); International Maritime Organization (IMO); World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). ECOSOC requested an advisory opinion of the Court in two cases: Applicability of Article VI, Section 22, of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and Difference Relating to Immunity from Legal Process of a Special Rapporteur of



that the advisory function of the Court is discretionary.<sup>158</sup> As Kelsen puts it "the Court may, for reasons completely within its discretion, refuse to give an advisory opinion requested in conformity with the Charter."<sup>159</sup> According to Articles 59 of the Court's Statute and 94 of the UN Charter, the ICJ considers its advisory functions as a means for international organizations to obtain an opinion without any binding force, contrary to the judgments. However, even if not binding, advisory opinions are considered more than a simple advice.<sup>160</sup> In fact, such opinions have a certain moral authority since their contents are in accordance with international law.<sup>161</sup> Lessons can be learned from the Namibian case. There are analogies between the Wall case and the Namibian case before the ICJ in 1971, which eventually resulted in Namibian statehood. It is interesting to note that the wording in the Namibian ICJ Opinion is very similar in the Wall Opinion, in that it found that the presence of South Africa in Namibia was illegal; that South Africa was under obligation to put an end to its occupation of Namibia; and that UN member states had the duty to recognize the illegality of South Africa's presence in Namibia and had to refrain

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the Commission on Human Rights

<sup>158</sup> Claude Barrat, "The International Court of Justice and its Advisory Opinion on the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, 2004

<sup>159</sup> Kelsen, "The Law of the United Nations", quoted in Claude Barrat, "The International Court of Justice and its Advisory Opinion on the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, 2004

<sup>160</sup> Claude Barrat, "The International Court of Justice and its Advisory Opinion on the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, 2004

<sup>161</sup> *ibid*

from any dealings with the Government of South Africa implying recognition of the illegality of, or lending support or assistance to, its presence in Namibia.<sup>162</sup>

### 3.2.2. The Wall

On the 16th of June 2002, the Israeli government officially launched the erection of a Wall between the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, not on the green line (the internationally recognized border that existed between Israel and the West Bank until the war of 1967), but deep eastward, with tens of thousands of dunams of Palestinian land expropriated by Israel. The wall consists of an entire regime, with concrete slabs towering 8 meters high (25 feet), razor wire, trenches, sniper towers, electrified fences, military roads, electronic surveillance, remote-controlled infantry, and "buffer zones" that stretch hundreds meters wide.<sup>163</sup> With the construction of this wall, Israel has instituted several administrative measures designed to deny Palestinians access to their lands and their sole source of living. These measures range from land confiscation orders to home demolitions, permits to access their lands or even return to their homes, and severe restrictions on movement and trade even within the Palestinian cities in the West Bank.<sup>164</sup> The February 2005 Anti-Apartheid Wall campaign map reveals that when and if it is completed, nearly all of

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<sup>162</sup> <http://www.icj-cij.org/icjwww/idecisions/isummaries/inamsummary710621.htm>

<sup>163</sup> PLO Negotiations Affairs Department, on [www.nad-plo.org](http://www.nad-plo.org)

<sup>164</sup> *ibid*

the West Bank population will be affected by the Wall through loss of land, imprisonment in ghettos, or isolation in areas de facto annexed to Israel.<sup>165</sup> Although Israel maintains that the Wall is a temporary structure needed to physically separate the West Bank from Israel and thus prevent suicide attacks on Israeli citizens, the wall's location (in some places extending up to 20 km inside Palestinian territory) and projected length (currently 750 km despite a border with Israel of less than 200km), however, suggest it is actually an additional effort to confiscate Palestinian land, facilitate further expansion of illegal settlements, and unilaterally redraw geopolitical borders while encouraging an exodus of Palestinians by denying them the ability to earn a living from their land, reach their schools or work places, access adequate water resources, and reach essential health care facilities.<sup>166</sup> In fact, if the wall were truly for security purposes as claimed by Israel, it would have been routed on the 1967 pre-occupation line. The expansion of Jewish colonies and their infrastructure, coupled with the vast measures of administrative control and strangulation, will leave over half of a fragmented West Bank, without East Jerusalem for a future Palestinian state.<sup>167</sup> The demographic and geopolitical changes that the wall and settlement expansion impose will foreclose the possibility of achieving a two-state solution, and hence, peace. Israel has a dual goal in building the wall: to confiscate and de facto annex Palestinian lands and water resources necessary for a viable Palestinian state, especially in and around East Jerusalem; and to encourage a tacit exodus of Palestinians by denying them the ability to earn a

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<sup>165</sup> Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign Poster Map, February 2005

<sup>166</sup> [www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org)

<sup>167</sup> [www.nad-plo.org](http://www.nad-plo.org)

living from their lands and by restricting freedom of movement to such an extent that remaining in their cities, towns and/or villages becomes an impossible alternative.<sup>168</sup>

### **3.2.3. The Advisory Opinion on the Wall**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2003, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution asking the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to issue an advisory opinion on the legal consequences of Israel's construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The main findings of the Court concerned not only the erection of the Wall, but also major issues of the Palestinian Israeli conflict: the status of the Palestinian territory, the right to self determination of the Palestinian people, the applicability of international human rights law and humanitarian law to the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2004, The ICJ at the Hague found, by a ruling of fourteen votes to one, that the construction of the Wall by Israel in the occupied territory, including East Jerusalem, is "contrary to international law," and that Israel is under an obligation to cease the Wall's construction, dismantle the existing structure, and make reparations for any damage caused by the construction. Moreover, by a ruling of thirteen votes to two, the ICJ found that "all States are under an obligation not to

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<sup>168</sup> *ibid*

recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction."<sup>169</sup>

The ruling held that Israel's construction of the Wall in the West Bank constitutes a grave violation of human rights and international law. The construction of the Wall within the West Bank, and the annexation of occupied land is prohibited under the laws governing actions of occupying powers; the Wall's construction further violates a basic principal of the laws of occupation that legal rights to land cannot be acquired by way of military occupation. International law also states that private property cannot be confiscated or destroyed. This applies without exception, not even for security needs.<sup>170</sup> The Wall is another instrument (of numerous Israeli military occupation measures, including settlements, checkpoints, etc...) used to impose collective punishment on the civilian population and directly violates the rights of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians including their rights to freedom of movement, right to property, right to health, education, work and their basic rights to food and water. The Israeli construction of the Wall and its implications for the Palestinian people is in direct violation of the Geneva Conventions of which Israel is a contracting party.

### **3.3. How the Palestinians achieved PD success**

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<sup>169</sup> "Advisory Opinion Proceedings on Legal Consequences of Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", ICJ, Written Statement (30 January 2004) And Oral Pleading (23 February 2004) , see also <http://www.icj-cij.org/>

<sup>170</sup> Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign Fact Sheet: The Wall and International Law

Since 1948, Palestinians have been under the Israeli military authority, enduring the violence of occupation, displacement, hunger, humiliation, and now finally (with the building of the Wall) ghettoization and imprisonment. Palestinians have suffered throughout these decades under the watchful eyes of the international community, yet with no apparent recourse to international justice. Throughout these years, Israel has portrayed the Palestinians as conspicuously avoiding diplomatic channels of protest.

In 2004, with the ICJ ruling, the Palestinians were able to move their battle on the diplomatic and international level. The fact that Israel has launched an immense defamation campaign in an attempt to de-legitimize the highest judicial body of the United Nations and deny the Palestinians access to any form of official protest is a proof that such diplomatic approach is significant and effective.

The verdict was damaging to Israel's reputation and Public Relations line, based on the erroneous claims that the problem is Palestinian terrorism.

In addition to prompting world attention, Palestinian PD success rests on two major factors: the decision itself and the approach used.

### **3.3.1. the decision: a strongly worded advisory opinion**

Despite the fact that the US administration and Israel maintained that the erection of the Wall should be dealt with through negotiations, the World Court has rejected such arguments and ruled the Wall a violation of international law. Besides the blow to the Israeli Public Relations, the ruling has been explicit and vigorous. Officially

adopting the term "Wall" as opposed to the Israeli claim that it is a "barrier", the ICJ demanded that Israel not only ceases its building, but also dismantle parts that have already been constructed. In addition to that, Israel is required to compensate Palestinians who have suffered from this land grab:

*"Israel obliged to put an end to the violation of its international obligations □ Obligation to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall, to dismantle it forthwith and to repeal or render ineffective forthwith the legislative and regulatory acts relating to its construction, save where relevant for compliance by Israel with its obligation to make reparation for the damage caused □ Israel obliged to make reparation for the damage caused to all natural or legal persons affected by construction of the wall."*<sup>171</sup>

By "reparation", the Court advised that Israel must return all land and trees requisitioned and is under an obligation to return to the pre-status quo; i.e. before the illegal act took place. On the same angle, the ruling provides a clear-cut analysis and evidence of Israel's motives to establish de facto borders, not for security reasons, but for the imposition of de facto annexation of Palestinian land.

The ruling made it very clear that Israeli actions on the ground (the Wall and its "Associated Regime") were affecting a *"fait accompli"*, as an attempt to pre-determine final status issues by creating unilateral permanent realities. The Court also held that the construction of the wall entails substantial restrictions on the

<sup>171</sup> "Advisory Opinion Proceedings on Legal Consequences of Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", ICJ, Written Statement (30 January 2004) And Oral Pleading (23 February 2004) , see also <http://www.icj-cij.org/>

freedom of movement of Palestinians. Therefore, the Court found that Israel has violated guarantees of freedom of movement under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Palestinian's right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living as proclaimed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. All such actions, the Court maintained, cannot be justified by security measures – the following statement speaks volumes:

*"Applicable provisions of international humanitarian law and human rights instruments relevant to the present case □ Destruction and requisition of properties □ Restrictions on freedom of movement of inhabitants of the Occupied Palestinian Territory □ Impediments to the exercise by those concerned of the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living □ Demographic changes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory □ Provisions of international humanitarian law enabling account to be taken of military exigencies □ Clauses in human rights instruments qualifying rights guaranteed or providing for derogation □ Construction of the wall and its associated régime cannot be justified by military exigencies or by the requirements of national security or public order □ Breach by Israel of various of its obligations under the applicable provisions of international humanitarian law and human rights instruments."*<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> *ibid*



With these positively staggering facts, the ICJ concluded that the wall is not being built for military reasons. Though "security" is the constant and proffered Israeli pretext, coveting Palestinian land is the real reason behind the building of the wall.

To put it in a nutshell, the ruling "is the most significant pronouncement... of the legal framework which exists regarding Palestine... since it goes beyond considering solely the issue of the construction of the Wall by dealing with fundamental issues regarding the continuing Israeli occupation..."<sup>173</sup> and it has set a precedent in the history of Palestinian diplomacy on two fronts: Israel's furious diplomatic activity to sabotage the hearing and claim that the wall issue does not lie within the court's jurisdiction has failed; second, not only did the court accept the case, but it also branded the wall a political measure and a land grab by Israel. In addition to that, the court rightfully acknowledges that Israel is in "belligerent occupation" of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and demands that Palestinians be compensated for Israel's illegal actions.

### **3.3.2. a comprehensive approach**

The approach was comprehensive, ranging from a description of the situation on the ground, to the Israeli historical and continuous infringements of international law, to demands to the international community to act against such Israeli violations.

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<sup>173</sup> Jean Allain, "Beyond the Armed Struggle, The Relationship of International Law and International Organizations to the Palestinian Cause", Ibrahim Ab-Lughod Institute of International Studies, Birzeit University, 2005

In fact, the ICJ ruling went further than the international community had expected! The Court addressed Israeli actions as a whole, highlighting UN Resolutions (all violated by Israel), the illegal settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (including East Jerusalem), and reframing the whole conflict: it is no longer between two equal parties who try to settle a disputed territory issue, but it is the Israeli military occupation, and Israel is under an obligation to terminate its breaches of international law. The statements underlined the fundamental issues of the on-going conflict, not only explicitly expressing the illegality of the Israeli occupation, but also calling on the international community to recognize its own obligations in enforcing international law and protecting human rights in their own nations and internationally. The ruling pointed out that the obligations violated by Israel included certain obligations *erga omnes*<sup>174</sup>; i.e. towards all, in that all States are under an obligation to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and should seek an end to any impediments to Palestinian self determination.

*"Given the character and the importance of the rights and obligations involved, the Court is of the view that all States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem. They are also under an obligation not to render aid or*

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<sup>174</sup> Claude Barrat, "The International Court of Justice and its Advisory Opinion on the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, 2004

*assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction. It is also for all States, while respecting the United Nations Charter and international law, to see to it that any impediment, resulting from the construction of the wall, to the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination is brought to an end. In addition, all the States parties to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 are under an obligation, while respecting the United Nations Charter and international law, to ensure compliance by Israel with international humanitarian law as embodied in that Convention."*<sup>175</sup>

The ruling went far to call on the United Nations to consider measures against Israel. It concluded with:

*"...the Court is of the view that the United Nations, and especially the General Assembly and the Security Council, should consider what further action is required to bring to an end the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and the associated régime, taking due account of the present Advisory Opinion."*<sup>176</sup>

In summary, the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2004 means legal and diplomatic history for Palestine, and a strong salvo in favour of international law. The ICJ states that Israel had three

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<sup>175</sup> "Advisory Opinion Proceedings on Legal Consequences of Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", ICJ, Written Statement (30 January 2004) And Oral Pleading (23 February 2004) , see also <http://www.icj-cij.org/>

<sup>176</sup> *ibid*

primary obligations: to stop the illegal construction of the Wall and dismantle the already built parts, to undo all legislation and regulatory acts related to its constructions, and finally to provide reparation for all the damage caused by its construction. On the other hand, the Court ruled that the international community had both individual and collective obligations in that regard: it must not recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the Wall, it must not provide aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by its construction, and the United Nations should consider what further action is required to bring an end to the illegal situation resulting from its construction. The ruling gives strong legal and political impetus to any future efforts to realise the Palestinian right to self-determination and to end Israel's prolonged occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. However, the Palestinian leadership has failed to continue this unprecedented PD victory. What are the reasons? And how forces can be focused to gain international mobilisation against the Israeli flouting of international law?

### **3.4. Failings in the Palestinian PD and the use of the ICJ Advisory Opinion**

Although Israel received a major blow with the ICJ advisory opinion, the Palestinians remained passive and have failed to use this decision in their favor. In fact, the Palestinians have not embarked on a PD approach which would have involved utilizing and promoting their just cause, as clearly stipulated by the World

Court. The ruling required that a new coherent strategy be devised by Palestinians; instead, the latter only waited for things to come.

First, the reason behind Palestinian non exertion of political leverage with regards to the Wall lies in a shattered networking system and a poor organizational structure of the Palestinian Authority. Coordination with "organizations and networks that are separate from, independent of... the government"<sup>177</sup> is essential to have a state's voice heard. Despite some individual and civil society initiatives in villages to protest in a non violent manner against the Wall, officials from the Palestinian Authority have never cooperated with the villagers or participated in protest events. Leonard points out to the importance of government-civil society organizations and goes far to say that the "government must be more relaxed about deviations from the 'party line.'"<sup>178</sup> Protest events take place on a low scale; media attention is therefore meager. Thus, if planned on a larger scale (governmental level), they would have broader international attention and swifter reaction. Governmental-civil society coalition should be carried out to ensure a successful PD campaign.

A second important and overlooked aspect of Palestinian PD is the "living links"<sup>179</sup>; i.e. the Palestinian Diaspora community who are an asset, especially with regards to the Wall. This community represents an important channel of PD because they "undoubtedly help provide the cultural knowledge, political insight and human

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<sup>177</sup> Mark Leonard, "Public Diplomacy", Foreign Policy Center, 2002

<sup>178</sup> *ibid*

<sup>179</sup> *ibid*

intelligence that is necessary for successful foreign policy."<sup>180</sup> The presence of Palestinians around the world is actually an asset to Palestinian PD; unfortunately this asset has been ignored by the Palestinian leadership. In fact, the latter does not realize the importance of such community who can facilitate the work of Palestinian policy makers. Not only the Palestinian community abroad has the great advantage of reducing misapprehensions of the societies they live with, but their presence also reduces the cost of Palestinian PD, if the Palestinian Authority cannot afford the money to establish PD offices in each embassy.

It is true that the Palestinian Authority pays lip-service to the spread of global communications, the rise of information technology and media, and the development of civil society organizations which all have a powerful effect on societies in altering the craft of governments. However, this has never been reflected in the Palestinian governmental structure and budgeting system: the way resources are deployed do not echo the leadership's engagement in such field; furthermore, the Palestinian Authority's budget is tied up in buildings and people, leaving little to foreign affairs and the media (less than 2%).<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> *ibid*

<sup>181</sup> <http://www.mof.gov.ps/nbudget-law.asp>

### **3.5. Recommendations**

Despite few tangible steps being taken by the Palestinian leadership as witnessed by the ICJ ruling, the Palestinian government has not so far committed enough resources to a planned and sustainable PD, an element which has become an increasingly influential tool of influence on foreign policy. To counter attack Israel's powerful propaganda machine, the key challenge is to develop an efficient model of Palestinian PD, capable of having a real impact on countries of strategic importance. Palestinian resources need to be deployed in a manner that reflects the priority of the Palestinian foreign policy.

On the issue of the wall, Palestinian spokespersons must make it clear that Israel's aims behind building the wall are to impose an expansionist status quo, to complete the judaization of most of the West Bank, and thus undermine the possibility of the creation of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state. When Sharon's unilateral

"Disengagement" from Gaza took place, Palestinian officials hailed the event, while knowing that it all came in order to break through from Israel's escalating international isolation and to alleviate the problems facing Israel's occupation policies on account of the wall. Instead of besieging Israel's policies and keeping the spotlights focused on the real challenge, the wall and other designs of the Israeli occupation, the Palestinian leadership welcomed the disengagement, with little reference to these facts.

On another angle, a powerful internal networking system must be devised encompassing the three types of Palestinian institutions, private, public and civil society and the Palestinian community abroad. This type of channel would facilitate the promotion of a strategy of Palestinian resistance, combined with building strong ties with the International community. Any strategy should be decided in a unified manner in order to better serve the national common interests of the Palestinian cause. In other words, the focus should be on rationalizing the resistance in a way to make it more productive and to maintain the moral integrity of the Palestinians as a people who struggle for freedom and independence.

The following recommendations are based on Leonard's suggestions of PD's three dimensions (see 1.4.): news management, strategic communication, and long-term relationship building.

### **3.5.1. News Management**



As news management revolves around day-to-day coping with media outlets, there should be more consolidated links between Palestinian officials and locally based foreign correspondents. Leonard adds that Foreign Ministries should appoint "a spokesperson of international stature to major media organizations,"<sup>182</sup> as viewers get used to one single regular speaker to act as a public face.

An important element of news management is training in how to deal with the media and how to develop a way for planning for and thinking about the spectrum of PD activities in a fashionable manner to all diplomats and civil society representatives; as skill sets are required to carry out PD on a professional basis. Moreover, the most efficient way to counter Israeli and/or international propaganda is a daily follow up of world news, a mechanism to act against any distortion in the media and a professional way to spread the facts and inform the viewers.

### **3.5.2. Strategic Thinking and Communication**

As has been noted in Chapter 2, in order to address the "image" problem, there must be a PD department at the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see

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<sup>182</sup> Mark Leonard, "Public Diplomacy", Foreign Policy Center, 2002

2.5.2.). In an effort to promote Palestine abroad, the PD department should come up with a slogan, for example "Palestine Freedom Initiative" ... under this slogan, there needs to be specific themes around which the promotion of Palestine would be centered: non violent resistance (power of the people), freedom, multi-cultural society, *inter alia*...

Fortunately, technological development has greatly enhanced the ability of PD to reach out and engage local, diaspora Palestinians, and internationals on a continuous basis. Building on the Canadian example of PD, binders could be produced and distributed to all Palestinian missions around the world, with speech

modules, fact sheets, presentations, messages, and other tools that could be applied in support of public outreach activities. It is also necessary to develop a password protected website where information, video-material and other updates about the situation in Palestine (including the Wall) are posted for downloads for Palestinian representative missions abroad.

Communications campaigns, advices Leonard, must be proactive and regularly sent to missions abroad so that they are promoted in news stories in each country. "No opportunity to present a positive story"<sup>183</sup> about one's country should be missed. All activities abroad (whether cultural, economic; i.e. in trade

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<sup>183</sup> ibid

shows, or other) should be grouped under a single brand with a single logo and key message.

### **3.5.3. Long-term Relationship Building**

PD does not stop at a short or medium term planning to improve the image of one's country. It is a sustainable process, aiming at developing long term relationships with foreign countries and audiences. Palestinians should focus their forces towards actively building networks of relationships via follow up work. For example, the International Solidarity Movement<sup>184</sup>, created to support, protect and engage the Palestinians in non violent resistance, includes thousands of volunteers coming mainly from Europe and America. Palestinian organizations receiving these volunteers should be actively building lasting relationships with them, i.e. building real and virtual networks.

The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website should be used to build virtual networks, through policy discussion groups with solidarity groups abroad as well as with Diaspora Palestinians. In fact, involving discussions on foreign policy with the Palestinian public should be a shared Palestinian enterprise because public consultation initiatives lead to setting up priorities and

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<sup>184</sup> <http://www.palsolidarity.org/main/about-ism/>

formulating the values that Palestine should stand for internationally. For instance, an E-dialogue website could be established, whereby Palestinian citizens can download relevant documents and post their opinions and ideas on interactive message boards organized by themes. It is essential to involve citizens, civil society organizations, businesses and local municipalities in policy formulation, argues Leonard. Why? Because direct citizen involvement has several positive effects: first, citizens feel they have a voice that is heard, second, people's capabilities to provide wise guidance in the formulation of an accurate foreign policy should not be underestimated, and finally, this type of communication of government-citizen gives an image of a sound government based on openness and transparency in the making of Palestinian foreign policy and reform.

The significance of the ICJ ruling lies on its legal dimensions, but it should be tied up with a strong Palestinian PD planning and development. Not only do Palestinians need to work on the "branding" of Palestine, but they also must develop prompt responses to any unexpected eventualities that reinforce their strategic key messages and goals. The Palestinian leadership should ensure that there are clear-cut messages designed to be well understood to each target groups and countries. Managing crises is another important tool that the Palestinian Authority should work on to avoid undermining strategic goals. In order to achieve this, Leonard argues, a government must establish what he calls a "diplomatic SWOT team"; i.e. a team that analyzes

and highlights the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that one's country has with a foreign country.

The following table summarizes the idea:

*Palestinian Public Diplomacy in the USA (sample of PD SWOT)*

<b>Strengths</b>  Palestinian presence in major cities  Newly appointed Palestinian Ambassador	<b>Weaknesses</b>  Impact on decision makers slow  Pro-active media initiatives weak
<b>Opportunities</b>  Appetite for news in Palestine post 9/11 rising  Americans in solidarity with Palestine	<b>Threats</b>  Size and diversity of the USA  War on "Terrorism"  Jewish Lobby omnipotent presence <sup>185</sup>

<sup>185</sup> see Paul Findley's "They Dare to Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby", Library of Congress, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2003, and "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy", John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, Harvard University, March 2006

## Conclusion

Palestinian PD needs new thinking and decision making structures that are totally absent today. It is in the Palestinian national interest to manage its foreign policy in a manner that the Palestine case receives complete cooperation from foreign nations in order to reach an independent Palestinian state. In order to achieve an efficient Palestinian PD, the following recommendations are suggested:

- To issue a Presidential directive on PD on the full integration of PD into Palestinian foreign policies;
- To develop immediately a coherent strategy and a coordinating structure;
- To use internet resources with a view to fostering meaningful relationships with the West and foreign journalists<sup>186</sup>;
- To involve the private sector, civil society organizations and Palestinians in the diaspora for their credibility and independent messages;
- To make PD "THE" central work of all diplomats and ambassadors;

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<sup>186</sup> "How to Influence the Media? A Manual for Palestinian Policymakers and Media Professionals", Jerusalem Media and Communication Center, July 2005

- To establish a Training Institute in PD and in key areas of modern communication;
- To create think tanks and research centers that would pave the way for deeper understanding of foreign attitudes;
- To devise effective communication policies;
- To have politicians, lawyers and scholars visit Namibia and learn from their successful experience in the post-ICJ ruling.

As has already been noted, PD is a multiplayer apparatus that requires extensive and deep coordination. Palestinians are urgently requested to curb the widespread belief that they are "terrorists", and to embark on a dynamic and pro-active approach of addressing the West. As has also been mentioned, Palestinian policy making and PD are interconnected: if the strategy of suicide attacks (military force), which are "...morally repugnant and politically disastrous on all sorts of grounds",<sup>187</sup> is used, it cannot be compatible with a challenging political position vis-à-vis Israel. Military attacks against civilians undermine other resistance alternatives, including PD, and international support with Palestine. Military actions also engender a crumbling of the Palestinian resistance's moral high ground.

The Palestinian Diaspora (refugees and expatriates) and Non Governmental Organizations are genuine partners of the Palestinian leadership and they could play

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<sup>187</sup> Edward Said, "Immediate Imperatives", Dec. 2002, Al Ahram Weekly, also on <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2002/617/op5.htm>

a major PD role. This important part of society has been excluded from active participation in the national dialogue and diplomatic initiatives. Expatriates are an educated and affluent community, whose close and good connection with the international scene could press and advance their cause in a manner the Palestinian leadership and NGOs "inside" the Occupied Palestinian Territory cannot. The Palestinian leadership is requested to take a more proactive stance in engaging Diaspora voices because their activism would strengthen the Palestinian position. The leadership must impart a vision, clear principles, red lines and alternative scenarios.

The ICJ hearing was a turning point and a positive development in the Palestinian political struggle. Here, in particular, PD should not be unused. PD results will have a positive long-term significant impact on the Palestinian case, if used accurately.

This thesis, however, leaves other questions open. As it is being written, an unprecedented event took place: Hamas' victory in the January 2006 Parliamentary elections. This event triggers a new question: how can Palestinians devise a PD strategy with the emergence of a constitutional crisis between the newly formed government and the President?

Taking the Gramscian stand, the government should be a "national factor" and should not function as a party. The government should place itself above the parties and operate on behalf of the national interests of the state. Furthermore, "there should be a useful and fruitful relation [among statesmen, government officials,



leaders of civil society and [political society] in the expressions and functions."

Because of the lack of such components, adds Gramsci, "sterile erudition in place of political history ... the daily newspaper and the scandal sheet instead of books and great periodicals. Ordinary everyday fractiousness and personal conflicts instead of serious politics"<sup>188</sup> will prevail.

In view of Israel's successful isolationist policy of Palestinians and of high economic and political risks today, "serious politics" must replace "everyday fractiousness" in Palestine. The formation of a unified leadership and a consensus on a PD stratagem should receive a rigorous scrutiny.

Given its high potential benefits, PD is an essential benchmark in implementing a unified Palestinian strategy, with a *modus vivendi* formula, acceptable to all political parties.

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<sup>188</sup> Antonio Gramsci, "Prison Notebooks", Vol. 2, Columbia University Press, 1975